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ABSTRACT

This is the second of a four-part study on the function of social networks in school community relations in Pontiac, Michigan. This volume consists of a 20th century social, economic, and demographic history of Pontiac, focusing on (1) the role of the auto industry in forming the socioeconomic character of the city, and (2) race relations. Then the years from 1964 to 1970 are examined; this period is seen as setting the stage for the current complexity of the city's racial and social relations. Community conflicts over school desegregation are described in detail, as is the litigation (Davis et al. vs School District of the City of Pontiac) that finally led to the court order to desegregate the city's schools. Finally, the decade 1971-1981 is discussed in terms of the schools themselves and second, school community relations. Political issues surrounding the Silverdome, Pontiac General Hospital, development of the city's downtown area, and General Motors' move away from Pontiac are explored. The volume concludes with an assessment of how these issues relate to the education and the schools in the city. (GC)

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A SOCIOLOGICAL VIEW OF AN ALL AMERICAN CITY

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS
IN
PONTIAC, MICHIGAN
DURING THE
"AGE OF COMPLEXITY"

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UD 022 664

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PART II

A SOCIOLOGICAL VIEW OF AN ALL AMERICAN CITY

> In large part, contemporary man's self-conscious view of himself as at least an outsider, if not a permanent stranger, rests upon an absorbed realization of social relativity and of the transformative power of history. The sociological imagination is the most fruitful form of this self-consciousness. By its use men whose mentalities have swept only a series of limited orbits often come to feel as if suddenly awakened in a house with which they had only supposed themselves to be familiar. Correctly or incorrectly, they often come to feel that they can now provide themselves with adequate summations, cohesive assessments, comprehensive orientations. Older decisions that once appeared sound now seem to them products of a mind unaccountably dense. Their capacity for astonishment is made lively again.
>
> C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination. 1959.

There have been many occasions during the course of this research that I have lamented my role as a sociological researcher. By training and orientation I approached this research in Pontiac -- a study of social networks -- as an effort designed to further the understanding of social relationships and social problems, particularly in education. In this capacity, I sought out information systematically, based upon key themes identified by other scientific literature, or through public debate. But I wonder if, in the end, a creative writer or journalist might not have contributed more to our understanding of the drama and visual dimension in Pontiac that often is obscured in scientific

presentation. For the excitement and color of events is sometimes lost in dissecting phenomena.

Pontiac is many things: a community; a geographic location; a field experience: a laboratory, but more than these, Pontiac is populated by changing, controversial and interesting people. Human beings are complicated, dynamic, confusing, loving, frightening; they are varied and complex. As sociologists, we try to look for patterns in order to examine what people hold in common; to find patterns, structures and similarities in behavior. Yet, reality is so much more exciting, wonderful, and yes! awe inspiring, than our accounts. I have often been frustrated trying to express in objective terms what people have experienced with emotion and intensity. This frustration is not unique to sociologists: recent best selling books by world-renowned biologists have also tried to express the thrill of appreciation to be found in examining even the smallest of units, cells; or the grandeur of the imagination expressed in the cosmos.

This report does <u>not</u> contain the vivid pictures of experience captured in the human "essence" of Pontiac. For example, the poignancy of a parent watching a child go off on a school bus; the pleasure of a teacher who finds positive feedback by improved reading scores; the calm determination of a community leader trying, once again, to initiate a new program. A photographer or artist could better portray such sights: a man standing alone on the sidelines during a civic ceremony who had worked for 15 years to achieve the civic accomplishment being celebrated; the brilliant sunlight on autumn trees

in a park next to the new, starkly modern and severe high school; the line of shivering people stretching over half of a mile in zero temperatures seeking employment at GM. Not that Pontiac has not had its share of artists! Playwright Philip Dean, for example, captures the pain and struggle for survival and self respect among black families in the shadow of "Mogul Motors" ("The Owl Killers:1974). Local musicians and artists in the community express their realities in marvelously creative forms.

Human experience is paradoxical. For example, residents of Pontiac are poor: one out of four receives assistance; Pontiac has the highest rate of unemployment in Michigan and many social problems flourish along with poverty. Another researcher (Warren, 1976) labeled Pontiac a "deficit" community because local problems outstrip helping resources. Yet, "deficit" is a misleading term. Along with the problems, there co-exist the rich community exchanges in Pontiac -- the summer pancake breakfasts, or the school award program for the POP program (Pontiac Operation Propel), --that add up to a "surplus" of human concerns. Or, to further illustrate this point, we report on the turmoil and controversies of local politics and the many failures accompanying reform efforts. Some have asked if Pontiac is almost pathological because of local controversies. Yet, we also describe the many triumphs and the determination to "make it work" that surrounds some difficult and diverse political decisions. If we try to explain why people are reluctant to provide names for our network analyses and discuss distrust, secrecy, and suspicion in detail, we also must point

out our delight in talking to students and concerned citizens who were refreshingly open and positive. Many of them gave us information generously, because they hoped our research could help Pontiac. Throughout the study, we were struck by the contrasts we observed: the poverty of many in Pontiac, the extraordinary wealth of many in Bloomfield Hills; the technological sophistication of industry, the human naivete in social relations; the concern and commitment of some leaders, the callous neglect of others. These contradictions simply document the paradoxical quality of American life and reaffirm the magnitude of our effort to explain human behavior.

Our presentation will not dissect with the precision of traditional scientific research. Nor can we meet the community's expectations for problem solving. Our data contains much that is controversial. What we are trying to present is the context in which we applied social network research so that our analyses can be interpreted more effectively.

Why Pontiac?

> For all of us, the lesson is not to worry too much about the distinctions between information and expression, scholarship and art, for all photographs contain elements of both, depending on the interests of those who look at them. They are all answers to our questions and, though they do not change, our questions do.
>
> Howard S. Becker. "Aesthetics and Truth."

When Pontiac, Michigan was named an All American City in 1976, residents greeted the designation as a symbol of hope. Psychologically the award was important because it had seemed that a few years earlier the community was on the edge of ruin. At that time, nationwide publicity had informed the world of the violence associated with busing for school desegregation; the local crime rate for a small city was one of the highest in the nation; one third of downtown lay vacant and unused (although more than $10 million had been spent on urban renewal); and residents suffered from poverty, unemployment, deteriorated housing, and other blights on urban society. Now, the award as All American City testified that the violence associated with desegregation had ended and that Pontiac was in an upward swing.

Nor was this assumption unwarranted in light of many of Pontiac's advantages and resources. Located twenty-five miles north of Detroit in the most industrialized area of the U.S., the city contains four General Motors plants. It is the county seat of Oakland County, the sixth wealthiest county in the U.S. Pontiac enjoys the advantages of the state of Michigan's excellent facilities for higher education, recreation, abundant water supplies, educated citizenry and skilled work force. The GM tax base provides a strong source of revenue for the community and establishes Pontiac as a national industrial center. Indeed the more interesting question is why, with so many advantages, did Pontiac suffer the problems that made the city a national concern?

The Pontiac "story" between 1971 - 1981 reflects the struggles of urban areas to respond to massive political, economic and social changes begun in the sixties. Pontiac is "urban town in transition:" it provides an example of the complexity that surrounds contemporary cities and the ups and down of people responding to that complexity. In addition, Pontiac is an ideal laboratory to examine many significant features of American life during the past decade. Although it is too industrial to be representative of the national economy and has a larger percent of minority populations than the nation as a whole, it does reflect the dominant urban concerns of the nation. It is not "Middletown" (Lynd: 1929), but it could be thought of as representing four major dramas of the 1970's. First, Pontiac was the first northern city to experience school desegregation as ordered by the Federal courts. After a decade it is possible to have a more balanced view of events and evaluate the impact of the court decision on school and community relations. Second, Pontiac participated in almost every social service program designed to deal with poverty so that the legacy and transformation of "Great Society" initiatives can be reviewed in Pontiac. One out of four residents received some form of assistance throughout the period we examined, and unemployment was two and a half times that of any other city in the state. Third, there has been a transfer of political leadership from whites to blacks. The mayor, superintendent of schools, and director of the city hospital, all key local positions, today are held by blacks. Today, Pontiac has black city commissioners, representatives on the

Downtown Development Authority and county commissioners. This is in clear contrast to 1971, when it was unusual to see black leaders in any public sphere. Fourth, Pontiac is experiencing a major economic crisis similar to that taking place in other urban areas: the loss of an industrial base for jobs. The ups and downs of the automobile industry, and the surface prosperity of employees associated with manufacturing, masked basic shifts that occurred throughout the decade and encouraged migration into the City. Below a prosperous industrial facade, Pontiac was suffering from profound economic dislocation as the need for unskilled labor decreased steadily. This was not immediately evident during the sixties because the number of manufacturing jobs in Pontiac actually increased while they declined in other urban areas. As late as 1966, General Motors recruited workers in Appalachia to work in plants.[2] Spanish speaking Americans also swelled the industrial ranks. Many were migrant workers who were displaced by farm equipment who stayed in Pontiac after they lost their agricultural jobs. The Latino population, "a sleeping giant" in community life, increased from 5% of the city's population in 1950 to almost 12% by 1980.[3] Latinos, blacks, Appalachian whites, and native Americans added to the numbers of workers who sought opportunities in Pontiac during the fifties and sixties, and who would face problems related to structural unemployment during the seventies and eighties.

There are other pragmatic reasons to examine Pontiac. Although Pontiac is small enough to study; it is complex enough to show the

inevitable inadequacy of our efforts. It would be a serious error to underestimate the complexity of Pontiac. No research could capture the myriad ways in which the dynamic exchanges take place among 75,000-80,000 persons. In addition, Pontiac is a well-documented community; one can find innumerable government reports, dissertations and studies, and commissioned surveys that provide a wealth of data for measurement and description (Appendix I).

Public figures have been interviewed by several different researchers during the past fifteen years. In short, the community is small enough to grasp intellectually as a whole, compared to larger urban areas, but still representative of urban issues. Since a serious criticism of urban scholarship has been that the studies of megalopolis are fragmented and incomplete, illuminating only a tiny fraction of the problems without showing interrelationships and overlapping among phenomena, it is useful to have a site in which this can be attempted.

This is especially true in the case of school-community relations. Too often we miss the forest for the trees or the trees for the forest, depending on whether the researcher is a tree surgeon or a forest ranger. In educational research, "community" is usually a backdrop on which school dramas are played out; in community studies schools are given limited attention. To appreciate the interconnections between educational organizations and other environments, research demands an ecological orientation. Pontiac provides an opportunity to create that orientation: to examine

economic, political, social and educational phenomena interacting with each other over a period of time.

Furthermore, Pontiac is not isolated from the larger society, but intimately tied to a regional, national and international context that has profound impacts on local development. Interdependence as a fact of Pontiac life is often overlooked or covered up by explanations that attribute local changes to desegregation, or busing, or to a breakdown in family life, or a host of other factors. One task of our scholarship is to examine some of these claims and, show how external and internal events contributed to community change. Although many questions about change extend beyond the scope of this report, the Pontiac study can suggest some direction for the answers. We will ask, for example, what urban changes have had the most impact upon educational institutions. What do these changes mean to particular groups in the community - leaders, minority groups, children, the aged? How can public education adapt to major social transformations in the environment? What were the ways that school and community relationships influenced the desegregation process in the past? How do they do so today?

Historical accounts provide important ways of interpreting phenomena. They can remind us of the danger of oversimplifying complex events. In life we are invited to participate in a story, to witness the human drama on a dynamic stage. But the historic account is written at a particular time, and is not a final product. Historical interpretations will be interpreted in light of future changes: we reinvent our past by our present experiences.

In spite of obvious limitations, efforts to answer big questions are justified by the urgent need to understand the world in which we live and work. But often the specialist knowledge that permeates scientific research is simply inadequate to capture the circumstances that directly impinge upon the lives of ordinary citizens. As researchers, we are constantly aware of how superficial our knowledge actually is about the interrelationships between persons and groups. The reality we attempt to describe with bold and broad strokes is fragile and blurry: our grasp of phenomena is weak and feeble. Furthermore, our task is not only to conduct research, but to somehow make intelligible and understandable what we have learned through rational inquiry. Understanding Pontiac is a challenge to our skill, imagination and stamina as scholars, our will as citizens, and our hearts as fellow human beings.

Background of this Study

> . . . it is only our participation as members of society which gives us mastery of a natural language and a common-sense knowledge of cultural meanings, facilities which are essential in allowing us to make sense of what we observe in our everyday lives.
>
> John Johnson. Doing Field Research.

This study was born in 1974 when Edward Slawski and I submitted a proposal to The National Institute of Education (NIE) through the City of Pontiac School District to study ninth grade socialization in an urban desegregated school.[4] As we talked with students and staff

for the research project, it became clear that evaluating desegregation by studying schools was inadequate. School desegregation is a social policy and to understand its major impact required an analysis of the community at large. Students are in school for but a few hours: the major portion of their lives, and in most cases, the focus of their attention, lies outside of school in their homes and neighborhoods. Furthermore, school desegregation, as we concluded in the report, is not an interesting question in itself. As a matter of fact, desegregation tended to obscure the more interesting phenomena associated with race relations in this society.

In 1978, I submitted another research proposal to NIE through Oakland University, to study social networks in the community. The purpose of the grant was to develop theoretical models for network analysis dealing with school and community relations in Pontiac. NIE was interested in understanding networks to see if artificially constructed social networks could enhance educational innovation. Since I had previously written on networks in terms of community development (Scherer: 1977) and school and juvenile justice (Scherer: 1980), the grant seemed an ideal mechanism to bring together both my theoretical interests in networks and the applied questions about Pontiac that developed during the school study.

My ultimate goal is to use network analysis for a more comprehensive and inclusive framework for understanding social change. To study Pontiac is to study a community experiencing an economic transformation as massive as the agricultural and industrial

revolutions. It includes an examination of race relations changing at the local level because of groups who wished to redefine their status from subordinates to equals. It is a chapter in a bold social experiment designed to reduce social injustice by redistributing goods and services, and an example of efforts to transfer power to formerly disenfranchised groups. Thus, Pontiac provides an opportunity to study social change in an urban context beyond the headlines of crisis and conflict. As such, Pontiac. Michigan is intellectually, and politically significant as an "All American City."

Prelude to the Decade

> To compress the exceedingly complex relations among individuals and groups into formulas of polarity vents prejudices, but impedes understanding. Genuine moral commitment requires at least a comprehension of the real world. Enlistment on the side of the angels, while reserving the right to afix halos at will, calls for neither intelligence, nor skill, nor ethical sensitivity. Only recognition of the actual men and women revealed by the evidence permits valid judgments of goodness and evil, weakness and strength.
>
> Oscar Handlin. Truth in History.

To understand the decade, we must begin with an understanding of the "turbulent" sixties, particularly the period between 1965-1971, as well as some of the history leading up to these times. Fortunately, there was considerable "research" interest in Pontiac during this period and we can draw upon other scholarship to set the

scene. The following brief outline draws upon dissertations, government reports, newspapers, interviews, city/county/state and private studies and survey materials, and the personal files of Dr. Whitmer, Superintendent of Schools between 1954-1976.

Background of the Sixties

> Every day the Lawd sent I got up and went there to that plant, sometimes half sick. But I went everyday the Lawd sent. I've spent near 'bout half my life in that place. Standin' in front of a red hot oven snatchin' plates full of white steel. Eatin' blue dust and sweatin' like a pig. How much dirt you reckon I've eaten in that plant in thirty years? You ain't never tasted no dirt like that foundry dirt. It ain't real dirt, like earth, I mean. It's somethin' they make over there in plant six. They make it outta sand. Then they dye and mix it with some kinda chemical. The taste of it gets on your tongue an' you get so you taste it no matter where you are. Can't wash it off, strongest soap in the world won't wash the smell of it off. I can smell it in my pores right this minute. Gets down below the surface of your skin, changes the color of your skin. And it ain't even much real dirt ... like earth. (Pause) You know, I read somewhere once sweat is like blood. It's the air that turns it red. For thirty years that hot oven has been suckin' th' blood outta me.
>
> Phillip Hayes, Dean. "The Owl Killer."

There are four historical "eras" in the development of Pontiac: "Commercial Birth" (1823-1900), the "Auto Age" (1900-1929), "The GM Era" (1930-1965), and the "Age of Complexity" (1966-present). The first, the period of "commerical" Pontiac, extends from the City's inception in 1823 up to 1900. In Fall, 1818, Major Oliver Williams was one of the early travelers to visit Pontiac: it became the county

seat in 1820, a village in 1837, and a city in 1861. Located on the territorial road from Detroit to northern Michigan, from Pontiac's earliest days commerce developed in both trade and local mills. Pontiac dominated rural Oakland County as county seat and as a commercial center. Prosperous area farmers from the surrounding land came to Pontiac to trade and conduct business, and they vied with commerical leaders to control the town. For example, Pontiac remained a "dry" town through World War I. The city was also a major rail center, boasting four railroads. As a result of its transportation facilities, the abundance of solid oak trees for wagon making, and thriving mills, there were several small manufacturing companies prior to the turn of the century. Moreover, the city was important in Michigan's early development because of its proximity to Detroit, as well as to fifty beautiful lakes within five miles of the downtown center, and its critical location as the "gateway" to northern Michigan.

A second historical era (1900-1920) developed side-by-side with the early automobile industry. The first self-propelled vehicle manufactured in Pontiac was made in 1900 by Martin Halfpenny; by 1910 automobile manufacturing had completely replaced carriage making. Between 1901 and 1920 Pontiac saw the birth, merger, and death of several small automobile manufacturing companies. Names such as Rapid Motor Vehicle Company, Welch Motor Company, and Oakland Motor Car Company, attest to the variety of different entrepreneurial efforts. Within a decade, Pontiac became a one-industry town. By 1909, The

Oakland Motor Car Company was incorporated in General Motors and the GMC trademark placed on trucks (1911). Related industrial activities, such as the Wilson Foundry, established in 1913, employed as many people as the GM plants for nearly a decade, and also contributed to the expanding automotive industry.

During this early period of automotive development, major civic institutions were put into place. Pontiac General Hospital was built in 1902, the Pontiac Press evolved out of a smaller weekly paper in 1900, rural post office delivery began in 1900, a motion picture house opened in 1910, a new city hall was built in 1908, the state mental asylum's name was changed from the Eastern Michigan Asylum to the Pontiac State Hospital in 1911, and a modern high school building was erected in 1913. In addition, water and sewer services were developed, a commission form of city government replaced the outmoded and corrupt mayor-alderman system in 1911 and the State Fair was held in Pontiac for three years (1901-1904). Most importantly, the population of the city doubled. Modern Pontiac "emerged" between 1900-1914 as an automobile town, a transportation center a commercial center for surrounding farmers, an important county seat and a thriving metropolis. One historian (Behler, 1976) writes:

> In July, 1920, Pontiac was leading the ten largest Michigan cities, outside of Detroit, in average wages paid to workers in its shops, stores, offices and factories. Pontiac gave employment to 9,553 persons, according to research, and they earned an average of $5.16 each day. The nearest any other of the ten cities came to that record is the $5.00 average of Flint.

By 1929, Pontiac had become an important manufacturing center of national prominence and an exclusively GM town. In addition to acquiring the Oakland Motor Car Company during the early 1920's, GM affiliated with the Fisher Body Corporation in 1922. A merger with the Yellow Cab Company of Chicago to form the GM Truck and Coach Corporation in 1925 consolidated corporate involvement in Pontiac. In 1926 the new "Pontiac" car line rolled off the lines, and over 76,695 vehicles were sold, setting a world record for a first year car. Auto factories counted for 70% of Pontiac's industrial payrolls by 1927 Pontiac was thriving -- banks opened, schools expanded, another hospital was established, and a building code developed.

Ironically, the prosperity of the twenties that stimulated Pontiac's building boom was to become a significant factor in Pontiac's post World War II decline. Because so many new buildings and civic amenities were constructed prior to World War II, the city did not rush into modernization projects immediately after the war, as did many other urban areas. In 1945, Pontiac's capital stock of public buildings was still in good condition. However, by 1971, those facilities were so obsolete that it required considerable capital investment to catch up. Another negative feature of the 1920 boom was that it created a housing shortage. (GM threatened to leave Pontiac in 1920 due to limited housing for employees.)[5] Population had grown so quickly (up to 65,000 by 1929), that the demand for improved municipal services and housing outpaced supply.

During this period of industrial expansion Southern workers were invited to come to Pontiac, including several black families who settled in the city. Since the Civil War, Pontiac had been home for a few black families who moved to the city from Canada, and by 1929 the number of black residents had doubled, though it was still small.

Pontiac's rapid growth ended in the Depression. Population declined slightly, industrial expansion ended, banks failed, and welfare roles grew, and it was not until 1940 that Pontiac was recovering steadily from the downturn of the thirties.

GM factories in the city became important in the development of organized labor. After the confrontations in nearby Flint, UAW organizers concentrated upon GM plants in Pontiac. By 1941 the local wage in Pontiac Motor Division was the highest of all the GM plants. This plant was also the site of the longest strike in automotive history (1945-1946). Since their inception, unions have had an important political and social impact in the community. For example, in 1966, when the school superintendent wanted to build support for a new school, he consulted top union leaders. Unions also provided opportunities for black workers to gain traditional political skills.

World War II was a period of upheaval for Pontiac. With factories quickly converted to war-time production, workers were recruited from all over the country. The black population in Pontiac grew substantially: in 1940, Pontiac was 95.7% white, 3.8% black and .5% other races. For the first time, large numbers of women worked in the plants. Although workers were prosperous, the housing shortage was

severe and municipal services taxed to the limit. For example, a housing study in 1949 showed that 23% of the population lived in substandard housing (Urban League Minutes, 1951). However, in spite of community difficulties, Pontiac's factories established an outstanding production record.

The post-war suburban housing explosion stimulated suburban development outside the city. Obsolete, smaller factories in Pontiac closed or moved to suburban locations. By 1958, more production workers were employed in the non-urban sections of the county than in Pontiac. During the Korean War there was another surge of industrial production to meet military demands and industry again recruited people from the South. However, since no middle or upper income housing had been built since 1920, nor had the city prepared land for housing development, suburban projects surrounding the city flourished, while housing in the city continued to deteriorate. By 1950, the community's problems could no longer be ignored. For example, only 25% of the city's streets were paved; the Clinton River floods caused considerable damage; housing was inadequate and there were serious traffic problems. But local responses to developmental needs tended to be unimaginative and short-sighted. Rather than rebuilding the county courthouse downtown, it was moved to the outskirts of the city. This decision, combined with the sale of outlying land for shopping centers, laid the foundations for the decline of commercial downtown. Urban renewal facilitated the demolition of existing properties, but efforts to rebuild floundered. In fact, downtown re-development was not

successful until the late 1970's. As a result, downtown became a wasteland, a fact that was later exaggerated by a decision to build a ring road around the city. This did solve traffic problems, but it also effectively isolated the central city. Other factors contributing to the decline of the central city included restricted railroad travel and suburban industrialization.

The decline of Pontiac as an urban center was not immediately visible. Most observers agree that the 1961 centennial parade in Pontiac marked a high point in the City's history. Urban demolition had begun and renewal was promised; a new library and firehall had been built, the GM plants were prosperous, and the city was still a viable commercial concern. By 1964, however, the problems caused by competition from shopping centers, the failure of urban renewal, inadequate housing, and serious racial problems were to become clear issues of community concern. The controversies in Pontiac between 1964 and 1971, the first part of Pontiac's Age of Complexity, brought these issues into the open.

In summary, many events had affected the development of Pontiac between 1929 and 1964: the depression, the war, the consolidation of industry, and the suburban explosion. But, according to Behler (1976), local decisions reduced Pontiac's options in several ways. For example, civic leaders did not use annexation effectively or plan public works to stimulate residential home building; they delayed too long in planning for commercial revitalization and revising the tax structure. In other words, most of the problems that Pontiac faced in

1965 were the result of a complex series of actions and inactions taken by merchants, government officials, General Motors, and civic leaders. As Behler concluded about the period from World War I to the depression, the period of Pontiac's greatest growth:

> ..Although five annexations took place during this time, none was of sufficient size to give the city the residential growth space required to stem the flight to the open space and large lots in suburban areas in later years. During this period of relatively easy annexation, Pontiac lost its chance to remain the Metropolitan Center of Oakland County. When improved roads and personal transportation became available to nearly every family, Pontiac boundaries were too limited to provide for continued growth. Pontiac's future was circumscribed beyond the realization of most.

It is important to make this clear, since too often the press or casual conversation cite racial problems as the major reason for Pontiac's difficulties. That is not an accurate interpretation of a city in which decisions of white community leaders affected development, or a city dependent upon the fortunes of a major automobile manufacturer, or a city trying to respond to a variety of national and state initiatives. It is true that local events were complicated by the twin problems associated with race -- racism and inequality, and the consequences of both of these in terms of poverty, housing, educational achievement, and community stability, but it is difficult to view race as determining the decisions made by Pontiac's key leaders prior to 1960.

The fourth historical era, The Age of Complexity, can be considered the period from 1964 to the present. Some call it "the decline of Pontiac" because of the serious problems facing the city:

high crime, further housing deterioration, and the increase in poverty and urban decay. By 1971 Pontiac had only 10% of Oakland County's population, but more than 50% of the county's poor residents. Others call this a period of redevelopment, noting successful school desegregation, new downtown buildings, and the establishment of comprehensive social services. Several local observers divide this period, into ten years of decline (1964-1974) followed by six years of redevelopment. The "turning point" varies: for some it was building the sports stadium, some have mentioned the wide-track festival that brought people downtown and others have suggested school desegregation.

Clearly, the Pontiac of 1981 is more complex socially, politically, and economically, than Pontiac in 1966. This complexity shows up in the increased impact of external influences upon the city by state and federal units, international markets, changing technology, mass media, and rapid transportation. At the same time internal complexity has grown as local consensus about values has weakened, political factionalization has increased and bureaucratization has become more pravelent in all parts of the community. Residents have had to find ways to accomodate to events beyond their immediate control and to find strategies of adaptation in a constantly changing local environment. Indeed, the major challenge to urbanites is to understand and adapt to complexity. Our study will describe in some detail how complexity evolved in Pontiac.

Race Relations Prior to 1964

> Joshua. Harold is my brother an' he should be available to me.
> Goldberg. Why?
> Joshua. Because he's my brother!
> Goldberg. And what does that mean?
> Joshua. It means that he and I got a slice of the same memory. That's what a man is ... his memory. An' me and him got a thousand memories together.
> Goldberg. You have a strange notion about how people should interrelate.
>
> Phillip Hayes Dean. Thunder in the Index

Michigan, and Pontiac, have been on the cutting edge of changing race relations throughout history. Entering the Union as a free state, Michigan offered opportunities for blacks because of free public education, industrial jobs and progressive attitudes. It is important to recognize that there have been thriving black communities in Detroit and other sections of the state for almost 150 years. On the other hand, vicious riots took place on several occasions throughout the history of the state. Black Americans, like many other newcomers before them, had to fight discrimination and prejudice in every sector of social life.

According to the historian Dancy (1940), the first slaves in Michigan were Indians. Although slavery was forbidden in the Northwest Territory, 179 slaves were counted in the area by 1782. The state was a favorite site of the Underground Railway, but since escaping blacks

could still be hunted down in "free" states according to the terms of the Fugitive Slave Act, most continued on to nearby Canada and safety. After emancipation, several Canadian black families returned to Michigan, including Pontiac.

The Abolitionist movement began to grow in political strength about the time that Michigan entered the Union. An Anti-Slavery Society existed in Pontiac in 1836, although there is no record of black families in the city at that time. The Quakers played an influential role in the state's anti-slavery movement: Sojourner Truth, a Cass County woman who traveled throughout the country speaking on behalf of freedom, and Erastus Hussey, an influential leader in the underground railway, are symbols of the vigor of anti-slavery sentiment in the state. In Detroit in October, 1843, at a state convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of Michigan, black Michigan residents protested their status, petitioning the legislature for the franchise. This was awarded in 1867.

By 1850 sixty black persons were officially living in Oakland County, primarily in Pontiac. The next official count of Pontiac black residents appears in the records of the African Episcopal Church of Pontiac. A second wave of residents arrived in the city from Canada toward the end of the century. The first black student to graduate from Central High School did so in 1900 and went on to the University of Michigan for further education; in 1917, the first black woman graduated from high school.

The increase in Pontiac's black population followed the growth of the automobile industry from 1900 onward. Most came to Pontiac to work in the foundries and at the auto plants at some of the most difficult, dirtiest and unpleasant jobs. Few blacks worked on the assembly line until World War II.. But there also developed a small, but important professional group, including doctors, clergy and teachers that served the black community in Pontiac. Opportunities for professional careers were restricted: the Pontiac schools did not hire any black teachers until 1937; the first black policeman allowed to wear a uniform did so in the early thirties.

Housing conditions were deplorable The use of restrictive covenants insured that blacks would be forced into specific residential areas. Such covenants remained in effect through 1948, when the Supreme Court declared them to be illegal. But as late as 1960, 94% of the 13,774 blacks in Pontiac lived in three of the 16 census tracks in the city, near downtown or the plants (94.4%, 87.4% and 27.8% respectively). Among housing units occupied by nonwhites, 20.7% were considered "deteriorating", 7.5%, "dilapidated", and 23.6% "overcrowded." (U.S. Census: 1960).

Because of housing restrictions and ghettoization, residents of Pontiac were forced to turn inward to their own group. Sloan (1967) noted that when a group cannot break out of the social barriers erected to contain them, the population is more varied and differentiated than one would find in integrated neighborhoods. Warren (1975) also noted this process in many black neighborhoods.[6] Within ghetto walls

parallel institutions and organizations exist similar to those found in the larger city area. In some ways, these institutions could build a sense of community among residents. For example, in Pontiac, older black residents still speak freely about a vigorous cultural life prior to the fifties. There was a "Mayor" of Melody Lane; not an official political role, an unofficial title given to a popular figure who was associated with a local bar. Old timers recall a small town quality of black life in Pontiac, distinct from the big city ghettos of Detroit.

Another characteristic of black life in Pontiac was the Southern flavor of the city.[7] Many migrants to Pontiac, both black and white, were Southern and accustomed to racial segregation. For example, in Pontiac's auto factories, according to a Detroit Free Press (October 10, 1970) article, "shop foremen tolerate white only stickers placed on restrooms and drinking fountains by the local Ku Klux Klan." Only a few individual professionals could cross the walls separating white and black, before World War II. Dr. Howard McNeil, for example, who came to Pontiac in 1929, was the first black person to serve on the County Board of Medicine, but initially could not practice in the City hospital, Dr. Robert Turpin, a dentist, was the first black to be on the Board of Education during the fifties. Until the 1960's only a handful of black leaders spoke for a community restricted in geographic area and constricted in social mobility by racism and discriminatory practices.

Along with individual leaders, one black organization, the Southwest Community Center, did represent black interests during the

1930's. The Board of Directors consisted of both blacks and whites, a condition insisted upon by the School Board if the group wanted to hold meetings in a school building. Even the name of the organization reflected black containment. In 1950, the Southwest Community Organization became a chapter of the National Urban League.[8] The National Urban League had been born out of the same progressive ferment that saw the development of settlement houses, and professional social work. Its special mission was to assist non-white Americans to adjust to urban environments. The forms of service delivery reflected the social and political temper of the times. For example, in 1950, the Pontiac League sponsored a training program to teach domestic service skills to black Americans wanting domestic jobs in nearby Birmingham, Michigan.

Today, it is easy to forget the difficulties under which the League operated in 1950. The Ramada Inn refused to allow the Pontiac Urban League to hold an annual dinner meeting at a local hotel. Sears, Federal's, and Waite's (all local department stores) would not hire black salespersons. One-third of the entire black population of Pontiac was housed in low-cost public housing in 1954 (1,380 families) (Urban League papers). Plants were reluctant to hire black women. As one respondent explained:

> First of all, the white women said they would not work with black women. They were nasty, they were filthy, all they were supposed to do was work in the kitchen. They did not have the intelligence to work in the plant. If they hired black women they would have no one to do domestic work.

> Incidently, in the City of Pontiac we had Birmingham protesting because some of their help went into the plant. The women who did domestic work, they raised the wages so they had to pay them. They were deadly against it. This is where some of the big executives lived. The executives were against it too. So they politely told us that their wives would have no one to do housework. This was the set up. They did not bite their tongue. Many of the guys who worked at the plant, their wives worked there, their daughters and sons and they had a thing going. They did not want to disturb that. You would have your meetings and work out your policy before the meeting was over with, the people in Birmingham, the top executives knew everything. They had a good fight. (Otis Laurence, Oral History #3977)

These conditions, however, were not unique to Pontiac. Black Americans in Detroit and throughout the U.S. experienced similar kinds of discrimination in all walks of life.

Throughout the fifties the Urban League and other black community groups struggled to expand employment opportunities for blacks, especially educated youth denied white-collar jobs. Progress was slow, but there was progress. Sociologist Sloan (1967) documented this success in an examination of the conditions of blacks in Pontiac, compared to the rest of the U.S. On the basis of 1960 census data he concluded that for both whites and blacks, the percentage of blacks engaged in manufacturing was higher than in other urban areas of the nation. He writes:

> ....In terms of median family income, it can be seen...that whereas the figures for Lakeland and the nation are relatively comparable for whites, the figure for nonwhite families in Lakeland is nearly a thousand dollars higher than for nonwhite urban families in the nation as a whole. Thus, despite the

> fact that the median income of nonwhite families in Lakeland is only three-fourths that of the median income of Lakeland's white families, the discrepancy between categories is much less than at the national level.
>
> Much the same patten holds if we look at the percentage of families earning less than $3,000. This figure is frequently used as a measure of impoverishment. As regards whites, the percentages of poor families in Lakeland and in the nation are equivalent. But the percentage of poor nonwhite families in Lakeland is one-fourth lower in Lakeland. The percentage of poor nonwhite families in Lakeland is still considerable, however, and it is more than twice as high as the figure for white families. In one census tract in the Negro community, 45.5% of the nonwhite families earn less than $3,000. The median family income for nonwhites in this one tract is $3,559.

Along with increased financial status, Pontiac black grew in numbers and political power, as was typical of blacks in the North. According to McAdam,(1981) between 1910 and 1960, nearly five million southern blacks migrated northward and had their first opportunity to vote. During that period the number voting in presidential elections increased eightfold. The black vote was highly significant in the presidential elections of 1944, 1948, 1952, and 1956, but it was decisive in the close 1960 presidential election.

Locally, the increase in the black population in Pontiac reflected national migration patterns: 2,794 black residents were counted in 1940; 6,977 in 1950; 13,774 in 1960; and 22,760 in 1970 (U.S. Census: 1970). The white population had remained relatively stable throughout this period (63,788 in 1940; 66,704 in 1950; 68,256 in 1960; 61,680 in 1970). Blacks represented 17% of the city's population in 1940, 27% in 1970. The number of middle class black leaders also grew.

He notes that the shortage of black professional and managerial positions in the community was aggravated by the fact that many blacks in this category lived outside of the city.

One significant event that foreshadowed history took place in 1956. The Pontiac Urban League and a small core of business and professional leaders in the Rema Club, initiated a suit against the Pontiac School Board, charging the school district with gerrymandering neighborhood boundaries to prevent black children from attending white schools. The Courts ruled in favor of the School District.[9]

The 1956 court case reflected the growth in numbers of middle class black leaders in Pontiac. This increase, in turn, reflected a convergence of factors: economic phenomena (prosperity, an emerging service society); educational conditions (the presence of growing numbers of educated black leaders who had unexpected opportunities for learning through World War II service experiences and the GI Bill, mass higher education, increased K-12 options); political changes (the Northern migration to urban areas in which blacks could influence political outcomes significantly) and cultural developments, such as television. These changes nurtured a core of black leaders who were to change local history during the sixties. Throughout America there were major developments in race relations. In Pontiac the change resulted from protests against inequality that ranged from street rioting to political action, (e.g. boycotts) the use of legal institutions to achieve goals, (e.g. the court decision on desegregation) the

organization and mobilization of human resources by local groups (e.g. NAACP, Urban League) and the resurgence of cultural movements that helped many blacks to assert and define their black identity. In sum, the stage was set in Pontiac, as in the rest of the U.S. for the drama of the sixties by the slow but steady gains of middle class blacks during the fifties.

Schools Prior to 1964

> The School District of the City of Pontiac, Michigan is a microcosm of America. The aspirations and dreams of America for the "good life" are those of Pontiac. And the wide ranging human problems of America are mirrored in Pontiac. Thus, the challenge of Pontiac is the challenge of America, and the struggle to achieve continually higher levels of human development will be won, or lost, in the Pontiacs' of America.
>
> This is the challenge of the Pontiac Schools. This is a challenge which is worthy of the highest endeavors and best talent that the teaching profession can provide. For it is through effective public education that the necessry development of human resources will occur in the Pontiacs' of our country. It is through the professional skills and wisdom of teachers that the required effectiveness of education is to be won.
>
> A Challenge and an Opportunity: Professional Service in the Public Schools of Pontiac, Michigan, 1963.

Throughout Pontiac's history, citizens have generally pointed with pride to their schools. Since Michigan was part of the Northwest Territory, the state provided free public education from the start. In 1981, for example Pontiac Central High School celebrated over a century

of accreditation building upon a subscription school that existed in Pontiac in 1842. During this period, the school district was thought to be one of the most progressive in the State. As the largest district in Oakland County, Pontiac remained unchallenged as an academic leader until the sixties when suburban districts also expanded and attracted middle class students who left urban centers.

In the annual school report of November 11, 1963, the Pontiac School District reported a decade of progress that included building ten new schools (including one secondary school and one junior high facility) and twelve major additions to schools, all funded on a pay-as-you-go policy. In addition, a modern school administration building had been built downtown in 1964 and was completely paid for before it was occupied. The report notes that Pontiac had the lowest debt per pupil in the metropolitan area; $160 per student as compared to Detroit with $1,790 per student). Before commenting on physical programs, the following curricular improvements were listed:

> "Revised Mathematics Program, Modernized Science Program and Facilities, Rapid Learner Program, Expansion of School Libraries, Reading Improvement Classes, Language Laboratories, Expanded Guidance and Counselling Service, Improved Physical Fitness Program, Education For Increasing Numbers of Children, More Adequate Teachers Salaries, Keeping Pace with the Cost-of-Living Rise, Additional Programs for Handicapped Children"
> Pontiac School District Report, 1963.

The report also noted that enrollment had risen from 16,917 pupils in 1954, to 22,041 pupils in 1963, but predicted that enrollment would level off at approximately 22,200 by 1965. This

estimate was reasonably accurate; current enrollment in the school district is 19,000. By 1965 there were 1,042 professionals on the staff, or 45.14 per 1000 pupils. In an attractive recruiting brochure, the district is described as providing special services and opportunities for prospective teachers as well as excellent salaries (Pontiac School District Report, 1963).

One conflict over school policy is interesting. Pontiac schools received some national publicity in 1961 when parents protested the use of such books as Pearl Buck's The Good Earth, and Walter Edmonds' Drums Along the Mohawk. This incident shows the strong religious fundamentalist orientation of many parents, the majority of whom migrated from the South and had conservative views about morality. Many of the protesting parents had maintained strong religious ties to strict conservative church groups. (Letter to the Superintendent, November 14, 1961.)

Generally, Pontiac residents supported their schools enthusiastically prior to 1965. Probably the clearest evidence of strong school support in the community was the successful millage campaign of 1964. A school study committee that examined school needs before making recommendations to the Board of Education commented on the detailed information provided by the administration and the careful planning that went into millage campaigns. The Superintendent made a deliberate effort to maintain close ties with influential local leaders. The millage renewal and 8.75 additional millage request in 1964 was approved by a 5 to 1 margin (5,200 votes

for, 926 against). An example of the planning for the campaign is found in the superintendent's diary. The following speaking engagements to boost the millage are listed:

> "Thursday, March 31: Westside Kiwanis; Friday, April 1: Exchange; Thursday, April 7: Rotary Club; Monday, April 11: High 12; Tuesday, April 12: Professional Business & Professional Women's Club; Tuesday, April 12: Pontiac Manufacturer's Association; Wednesday, April 13: Lions Club; Wednesday, April 20: Northside Kiwanis; Thursday, April 21: Optimists Club; Monday, April 25: Soroptimist Club; Wednesday, April 27: Civitan Club; Tuesday, May 3: Kiwanis Downtown"
> Papers, Dana Whitmer

In addition, the school superintendent maintained close personal ties with community leaders. He was a resident of Pontiac, and personally active in civic and community groups.

The similarity between school and community leaders prior to 1964 enabled schools in Pontiac to perform a "community maintainance function."(Peshkin: 1979) This refers to the ability of schools to extend the socialization process beyond homes and churches, into formal education. When there is congruence between the values of the various institutions, this enhances the stability of the community. At the same time, because the school is important to the community, community groups are willing to give support to education.

However, there were significant exceptions to this harmonious relationship. The Pontiac Township Businessmen's Association, actively campaigned against the millage increase. Although the township represented 2% of the district's assessed valuation, according to district publicity, 8% of the student enrollment lived in the township.

The Pontiac school district is twice the size of the city and encompasses several adjacent geographic areas. In recent years residents living in these contiguous areas generally do not want to be part of the city, and have tried to disassociate themselves from the Pontiac public schools, but in the fifties advertisements for homes in this area listed association with the Pontiac schools as an advantage for buying. Efforts to break away from the District have been unsuccessful and a reservoir of resentment exists among some voters who would prefer to have their children attend other public schools.[11] Racial tensions aggravated this problem in the sixties, but financial concerns compounded the issue during the seventies.

Another group in the community with whom school administrators had strained relationships were black parents. The 1956 Court case was one of many examples of growing alientation. Clearly, the local consensus about community values expressed in school policies had either to be enlarged or divided to accomodate the growing concerns of the black population. Black "power" was becoming a political force throughout Pontiac, not only in schools, but in city government, housing, employment and welfare. However, few local leaders were prepared to share decision making. Nor was Pontiac unique -- white America was generally insensitive to the concerns of black Americans in all facets of life. Nevertheless, because headlines and public attention concentrated upon schools, school desegregation came to be the symbol of race relations in the broader community context, and schools became synonymous with racial changes.

It is interesting that racial confrontation centered upon educational institutions rather than the political and economic arenas in which major decision making takes place in contemporary society. Obviously, social and economic equality require more than equal educational opportunities. But the cultural importance of public education - the ideology and belief system surrounding schools, and the assumption that it would be relatively easy to influence educational structures, may explain, in part, why education became the center of racial controversy.

In addition, black Americans looked upon education with some awe. They saw evidence of its value in promoting social mobility among black professionals, and like white Americans, often confused educational opportunity with economic opportunity. Schooling was given high priority among black citizens: it promised to open doors to dignified, free and prestigious work. As a result, school desegregation must be understood to be a cultural issue and cannot be understood in political, educational, or social terms exclusively. In Pontiac, a host of local values, shared understandings and customs were challenged by the court order. We will argue that educational or social research that neglects the cultural dimensions of desegregation - its symbolic meaning, as well as its unintended consequences for community life - overlooks the most important aspects of the experience.

Setting the Stage: 1964-1970

> There are two modes of viewing change, the passive and the active. The passive mode, in this case, is analogous to the passive mode in grammar. It implies that the ego is on the receiving end. The individual is the object of change. The active mode, on the other hand, puts ego, the subject of the sentence, on the initiating end... Change is seen as resulting from ego's behavior ... most of us tend to empathize with the individual who is trying to bring about the change. One might just as readily empathize with other individuals in the environment who oppose the change.
>
> Roland Warren, Truth, Love and Social Change.

The last stage in Pontiac history (1964-1981) can be called the era of complexity because of the variety of changes that took place in both the internal and external environment of the city. For analytic purposes, we will separate school history from community history for this period, but in fact, they are very much intertwined. This interrelationship often was not recognized by residents and leaders of Pontiac because city and school administrative units were distinct. Both spheres of influence, however, confronted the problems of race relations. For the decade 1971-1981 actually reflects the "working out" of conditions and events that emerged between 1964-1970. It was to become the most controversial, active and important historical period in changing relations between schools and other local institutions. This was also the most politically controversial period in Pontiac's educational history.

During the late sixties, the strain of prolonged community divisions and extensive documentation of "de facto segregation" chronicled in official reports, as well as a national mood that encouraged social change, combined with racial frustrations to erupt in urban street violence throughout the U.S. The actual busing of students to achieve school desegregation in 1971 was the climax, not the cause of racial controversy in Pontiac, although this is often overlooked in media stories and the recollections of local citizens. The actual school desegregation suit filed in federal court in February, 1969, was greeted at the time with little public fanfare. The community was so involved with a protracted conflict about the site for the new high school that this - not the court case- became the lightning rod that grounded many unrelated educational concerns.

Furthermore, although school desegregation appeared to be the most significant factor in Pontiac during this period, with hindsight we suggest that the focus of our stage setting, from a sociological view, must rest upon General Motors. Throughout the sixties and seventies the industrial workplace changed rapidly, although this was largely unnoticed. Pontiac's very name is identified with automobile manufacturing: GM supplies 56% of the city's tax base and most of the employment for residents. Many of the residents of the city had been recruited to come to Pontiac by GM, and prior to 1960, when most of the students in Pontiac left school, they went to work for GM. The auto industry even affected the population's identity with the school. A school administrator once explained that many of the Southern workers lost their Southern home ties when the automobile contract was altered

to eliminate "down time" for model changeover. Prior to this, during auto down time in the summer and early fall, workers went back to Kentucky, Tennessee, or Mississippi to work on the farms until the shops started up again. The school district had to set aside places for the children that they knew would enter school later.

In 1970 a foreshadowing of what lay ahead took place. Although 1966 through 1969 were good automobile years, conditions were bad in 1970. When the Pontiac Division had a 14% drop in sales, the city was deeply affected. A Detroit Free Press article quotes an auto dealer who said that: "People are scared. We don't know what is going to happen." (March 22, 1970). The long auto strike of that year caused additional problems in the community. Furthermore, GM laid off fifteen percent of its permanent work force. The lesson was that Pontiac had become totally dependent on the fortunes of GM and was helpless to protect itself without economic diversification. But it was not recognized.

The late sixties also set the stage by creating a false sense of security. First of all, the number of manufacturing jobs in Pontiac had actually increased, as the chart below indicates.

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS BY SELECTED MAJOR INDUSTRY DIVISIONS
CITY OF PONTIAC MICHIGAN, 1954-1967*

	1954	1958	1963	1967
Manufacturing	32,634	20,759	28,075	37,000
Retail Trade	5,713	6,654	4,808	6,145
Wholesale Trade	1,934	1,045	979	2,150
Selected Services	1,300	1,444	1,388	1,723
Government[a]	2,040	2,388	2,910	3,263
Total (of above)	42,621	32,290	38,160	50,281

* U.S. Bureau of the Census of Manufacturers, Retail Trade, Wholesale Trade and Selected Services for Michigan (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954, 1958, 1963 and 1967 issues).

Secondly, automation was transforming the work place. Automation had been heralded by social scientists in the fifties as revolutionary: gloomy discussions of joblessness alternated with visions of leisure and abundance for the future. But automation in most automobile plants did not lead to either massive layoffs or increased leisure. Companies did not fire, but they did not hire. As a result, automation was largely forgotten by the general public because the labor market did not show any reactions to the changes. Moreover, young men were needed to fight in Vietnam; other young people attended institutions of higher education; and many went to work in the growing service sector of the economy. There was an illusion of unlimited job expansion when, in fact many jobs were eliminated by new technology. For the unskilled, both young and old, the reality of the seventies would be "structural unemployment" - the loss of jobs due to the elimination of unshielded tasks. This would be accelerated as competition from international markets forced American industry to turn toward more sophisticated manufacturing processes. High technology creates new opportunities for engineers, computer operators and financial specialists, but eliminates many repetitive, routine operations that have been performed by the kinds of unskilled workers who had come to Pontiac to seek work. During the seventies evidence of the change in the workplace could be seen in the rising unemployment figures of Pontiac. But even these were frequently overlooked because they were overshadowed by the general prosperity of Oakland County.

Another caveat must be made before we discuss the event that took place between 1964 and 1971, and that is the role of the media in portraying Pontiac. Since normative institutions, such as schools, rely upon their reputation to develop support, negative publicity undermines their legitimacy and poses a serious threat.

Pontiac schools occupied the national spotlight between 1969-1971. The court decision, legal controversies surrounding busing, sit-ins and boycotts by local groups who wished to affect educational policies, the bombing of the school buses in 1971, the walk to Washington by Irene McCabe and women in NAG (the local anti-busing group) for a Constitutional amendment outlawing busing, and speeches and debates in many forums (e.g., the David Frost Show) kept Pontiac schools in the national view. The community also garnered positive publicity based on the determination of some parents and community leaders to "make it work;" the favorable response of most students to desegregation; the impressive educational goals and physical design of an innovative educational park -- the Human Resource Center, and the articulate comments of the school superintendent and local community leaders. But the negative media publicity was much louder and more sensational and it is strongly resented by residents to this day.

Nor is it possible to estimate the damage done to the school district by the publicity associated with events during those turbulent years. As late as October, 1981, the New York Times recalled "busing violence" when discussing the financial difficulties of several troubled school districts in Michigan, including Pontiac. The article notes that

Pontiac was one of several districts having problems, but only Pontiac was linked to the "past." The Detroit Free Press, explaining reasons for voter resistance to school taxes in seven communities in 1981, still attributed the resistance in Pontiac to the violence associated with busing. The point is that the past is continually revitalized in media accounts, partly because respondents continue to refer to busing, partly because it has become part of the Pontiac Story.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the publicity was a significant factor in helping the school district obtain thousands of dollars in grants to assist with the desegregation process, for supplemental educational programs, for research and evaluation studies, and for meeting special needs of different student populations. For a city of its size, the amount of money raised for educational programming was impressive.

Research can also be used to foster publicity, both negatively and positively. Since findings are usually complex and cannot be simply digested or reported, they are easily distorted or taken out of context. In the growing body of social science literature on the problems of knowledge utilization and dissemination, the Pontiac "story" is an important example. National media as compared to local media serve different functions. National media personnel become interested in cities such as Pontiac when a major event occurs, usually a catastrophe. The journalistic accounts explaining the background of the local event are usually brief and superficial because national audiences are seldom interested in detailed analysis or feature articles.[12]

Local media, in contrast, do have an audience for such materials. Furthermore, national follow-up stories almost always contain brief references to previous events that carry little or no interpretation. Should a city experience another event worthy of national media attention, old newspaper files based upon the original sketchy stories from the past provide the background for locating the current story. From a national perspective, it simply is not worth the investment to develop more elaborate accounts since these would be of limited news value. But the result is that national media reinforce views of a community that are difficult to change. Thus, after ten years, Pontiac is still perceived as the city that experienced violence due to busing.

Slawski and I experienced a similar "historical" handicap when the Detroit newspapers commented on our ethnography of the high school in 1978. In spite of the report's conclusion that desegregation could not be understood apart from other community and educational phenomena, the newspaper's interest in the research was almost entirely based upon accounts of disruption. Students and school staff were incensed by the outbreak of unfavorable publicity once again and felt betrayed, not only by the research, but by media that overlooked years of relatively peaceful school operations.

Community leaders also believe that the media portrays a negative image of Pontiac (desegregation is almost always linked to "blue collar" as the adjective to describe the city), and strongly resent media accounts. Furthermore, local educators are justly defensive when efforts to be honest and supportive of research backfires because of

media interpretations. Media politics are particularly influential in affecting Pontiac's relations with the County, Detroit, and the State. Unfortunately, experiences have led to a preoccupation with the community's image and increased suspicion and hostility towards those who investigate the city's problems.

In describing the turbulent field populated by the school and other local community organizations between 1964-1981, we are describing the interaction of local events on national perceptions of the community, as well as the effect of national (and international) events on the community directly. Pontiac has never been isolated from the world: it is a part of the ongoing dynamics of contemporary society, both in absorbing changes and in creating change. But often the outside world has viewed Pontiac simplistically.

In short, the "busing" controversy and the actual desegregation of public schools in 1971 became the catalyst to bring together many of the negative and positive phenomena that were taking place in Pontiac throughout the sixties. Desegregation was to become a significant community event that would dominate school and community relations for the next decade and serve as a benchmark from which people in Pontiac could measure change. Yet it did not develop overnight: it reflected the growing frustration, political skill and economic strength of black Americans in Pontiac, the inability of outmoded institutional policies to deal with changing demands, as well as the national events that affected local communities during the decade.

The City: 1964-1970

> Boundary shifts in our understanding of "the political" and hence of what is public and what is private have taken place throughout the history of Western life and thought. The relatively open-textured quality of politics means that innovative and revolutionary thinkers are those who declare politics to exist where politics was not though to exist before. Should their reclassifications stick over time the meaning of politics--indeed of human life itself--may be transformed. Altered social conditions may also provoke a reassessment of old, and a recognition of new, "political" realities.
>
> Jean Bethke Elshtain, Public Man, Private Woman.

Most white residents of Pontiac did not realize how the emerging political influence of black leaders could affect the city. The subordinate status of blacks had been a taken-for-granted assumption prior to 1950, and although there was considerable evidence that this assumption could no longer be sustained during the sixties, it was not clear how local institutions would accomodate to change.

Black political leadership came to the forefront in Pontiac during the sixties for several reasons: growing economic power, educational gains, and an increased level of expectations were important. In addition, both the national civil rights movement and the social consciousness developing in the black power movement that subsequently emerged, influenced local black leaders. In 1967 Sloan identified twenty black leaders in Pontiac and arranged them on a political spectrum from conservative to radical. Predictably, two of the conservative leaders were ministers and most of the radicals and

moderates were professionals. Sloan found that the top 20 black leaders included only one who earned his living in a community organization, three were managers of labor unions; five were in medicine or law; none were in business; two were in the school system; three were black ministers (all conservative); two were women. Although twenty were raised in the city, fifteen lived outside of the city. None were born in the city, and 53 were born out of the state.[13]

According to Sloan (1967), a splinter group from the NAACP was the source of black militancy during the sixties but conservative leadership dominated for several years. By 1967, he concluded, the conservative black leadership could no longer control the frustration of black residents and more militant leadership became influential, to the displeasure of traditional white leaders in the community.

Some of the militant leaders, publicly identified their ties to black nationalist groups and there is evidence that black militants in Pontiac were in contact with active militant groups in Detroit and Ann Arbor.[14] However, the strength of local black leaders lay primarily in the new opportunities available for moderate leaders to participate in local civic life. Prior to the ferment of the civil rights movement in the sixties, blacks were unable to work within the institutional structure of the city. The only opportunities to exercise leadership were in churches, black civic organizations and organized labor. As Sloan noted, black leaders in Pontiac were closely tied to their places in city or educational organizations: those rated as most influential (the top 11) had been officers in black associations. When new

opportunities for participation opened during the sixties, a small, but able, group of legal professionals were ready to challenge existing local structures, and use the legal protections afforded by the civil rights legislation at the state and federal level to bring about local changes.

In contrast to the growing strength of black leadership during the sixties, the political influence of local white leaders had been vitiated by many factors. The decline of downtown Pontiac had drastically reduced the number of local businessmen (predominantly white) interested in the community. Middle class whites had moved to the suburbs throughout the fifties and continued to do so during the sixties. Top executives from General Motors did not live in Pontiac, but rather in surrounding suburban areas. Politically, Democratic Pontiac was an island in the middle of Republican Oakland County. In addition, Pontiac's city manager form of government reduced the political clout of commissioners.

The politics of race in Pontiac influenced every local event between 1964 and 1971. What we mean by the politics of race are those negotiations and adaptations that reflected the growing political influence of blacks locally, the external pressures exerted by national, state and legal initiatives to provide oportunities for blacks and the resistance of those who opposed changes in existing race relations. However, it is too simple to explain all the controversies during this period in terms of "racism" alone. Each local issue was entangled in a host of related concerns that touched upon other

economic, social, educational and political issues. Few whites understood that the black citizens of Pontiac were engaged in a cultural revolution through which they expected to redefine themselves in the community. Similar cultural movements would later take place among other ethnic groups and women, but in the early sixties, the black challenge was a new phenomenon. For some, this period would become an occassion for "learning;" for others, it would be a brightening period characterized by the loss of a stable and secure world, and for others, this would be the time in their lives when the world opened up possibilities for positive development. By the end of the sixties, Pontiac would be different and the schools that existed to promote the community's values, would reflect these changes.

City development provides an example of how the politics of race affected decisions. Controversies over downtown rebuilding were connected with concerns over public housing. When the bulldozers stopped in 1960, one third of the central business area (downtown) was vacant and in spite of several efforts, nothing would be rebuilt on this property until 1979. During this period, downtown literally "died." Bereft of stores, with few county offices because these had been relocated in the county complex on the outskirts of town, and by-passed by motorists using the new ring road or the I-75 interstate highway that did not go through the city, the land remained vacant.

Black leaders opposed a commercial downtown project, and used the occassion to dramatize the need for low cost housing. They demanded that problems of housing be given higher priority than

downtown development. Although their efforts to prevent the city commission from signing a building contract failed, black leaders were able to use the occasion to bring attention to housing problems. This strategy had to be used often becasue white leadership was unwilling or unable to confront the black agendas, Only by using white political issues to force other agenda items could blacks hope to bring about changes.

A major factor compounding the housing shortage had been a city ordinance passed in the fifties prohibiting the construction of public housing.[15] The ordinance resulted from petitions, by whites, who wanted all public housing to be located in black neighborhoods. In 1965, militant black community leaders filed complaints against the ordinance with the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. The ordinance, in fact, had been unconstitutional, but for eleven years it prevented the construction of badly needed low cost housing in the city. Sloan (1967) considered the housing ordinance an example of black powerlessness in Pontiac. The fact that it would exist unchallenged, in his view, illustrated the inability of blacks to utilize the existing legal protections of the State to improve conditions. But by the mid-sixties, black leaders remedied this situation.

It is important to point out that Pontiac's housing problem affected almost every dimension of civic life. One of the reasons why the pool of black leaders was so small, according to Sloan (1967), was that the shortage of middle class housing forced professional blacks to live outside the city. Today this is true of both black and white

middle class professionals. Over half of the city's teachers do not live in the school district. At the same time that middle class residents moved out (the upper middle class had left the city during the thirties when attractive lake property and prestigious addresses closeby were available for those who could afford to buy property), the poor continued to move into the city. There still are few other alternative addresses for poor people in Oakland County. As the suburban boom continued, cheap rural housing had disappeared. Pontiac became the refuge for those restricted by welfare budgets to a minimal monthly housing budget, or for the retired worker who does not enjoy the generous retirement programs later won by unions from the auto industry. In the seventies Pontiac attracted a growing number of women, single heads of households, discharged patients from Clinton Valley Hospital and the elderly poor. Outside funding from federal and state governments, and the GM tax base, helped to fund some of the needs generated by the poor in Pontiac, but those middle class residents still left in the city and those working in the GM plants were severely strained to keep up with the demands.

Low cost housing puts the city of Pontiac in a double-bind situation. If the city responds to the desperate human needs of the poor, more poor gravitate to the city. If the city ignores their needs, residents are subjected to reprimands by those concerned about human welfare. Like other urban areas, Pontiac suffers because affluent suburban communities refuse to assume responsibility for social problems. During the sixties and seventies, the solutions

proposed nationally consisted of providing funding to alleviate distress, while confining the problems to particular areas. Pontiac was such an area.

Black leaders in Pontiac were most sensitive to housing issues because many blacks were poor, and many working class families continued to rent because of housing discrimination. Segregated housing patterns also required that any school desegregation program would entail busing students, unless the neighborhoods were desegregated. In 1971 residential desegregation seemed impossible. By 1981, however, the Pontiac School District requested an end to the court order because the neighborhoods in the city had become racially mixed and busing was no longer needed.

Another example of the politics of race concerned police-community relations. Those institutions of everyday life closest to people -- schools, work, police -- are the areas of civic life most prone to local controversy. Blacks in Pontiac had many encounters with the city police, and the Oakland County prison.[16] Like school-community relations, on the surface all looked well. Sloan, writing in 1967, was impressed by the decline of specific complaints against the police, which he attributed to the determination on the part of the police chief to develop a professional force. This decline, according to Sloan, was a remarkable achievement "given the handicap under which the police worked. Although the force has not been increased in size for eleven years, the work load has increased by 700% during this period" (Sloan). But many black citizens did not

view the police as neutral or professional. Throughout the sixties they would protest against what they perceived to be official racism. This was compounded throughout the sixties because Pontiac experienced an increase in crime and fear of crime became a serious problem. In a survey of 342 randomly selected persons in Pontiac in 1968, Smith found the following:

> Twenty percent of all respondents had been arrested by the police . . . . Of those arrested, 78% felt that they were treated fairly by the police . . . Those respondents who had never been arrested and whose children had never been arrested were more critical of the police; only 47% felt that the police were fair and impartial.

However, blacks in Pontiac would not give the police such positive approval. Throughout the sixties there were several boycotts and demonstrations that focused attention upon law and order, and blacks claimed severe harrassment from police. After the riot of 1967 in Pontiac that followed two days of rioting in Detroit, the problems of police-community relations became more evident. In 1968, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission conducted a public inquiry into the shooting of a black youth by police officers the previous December. After five days of public hearings, the commission stated:

> Whatever the facts, the whole power structure of the city assumed the officers were justified in shooting the youth. Whatever the facts, the non-white community felt the youth was shot because he was black.
> Michigan Civil Rights Commission Report.

In another instance a black city commissioner prevented city police from entering the Lakeside housing project. Fighting had erupted at Central High School earlier and when black students retreated to the projects after police used tear gas to disperse the crowd. The commissioner told reporters that he kept the police out to prevent further violence from erupting. Police, in turn, claimed that they had to rescue three workmen trapped in the project. Commenting on the incident later, seven black leaders issued the following statement:

> One does not have to be a lifelong resident of this community to be concerned about the recent conflict of our city's youth. There is concern for the use of violence, the lack of direction provided for our youth, the lack of community unity and pride, parental failure to instill in their youth the responsibility for their actions and attitudes, and the lack of respect of fellow men, regardless of the pigmentation of their skin.
> Pontiac Press, October 7, 1970.

Throughout the police-black community controversy, right wing agitators from the surrounding area came into Pontiac to stir emotions. The Ku Klux Klan was active in the area throughout this period. In the eyes of blacks, the final evidence of police racist sympathies occurred when the Police Association contributed $300 to the National Action Group anti-busing group in 1971. This contribution appears to have generated the most bitter reaction of the busing controversy.

The black-white perspective on criminal justice were made more complicated by city-county strains. The county jail, located in Pontiac, was overcrowded and outdated; the County prosecutor's office

maintained an independent investigative unit that often ran into conflict with the city police, and the County Prosecutor and the Pontiac Chief of Police were at odds throughout the seventies.

By 1970 Pontiac had the dubious distinction of having the second highest crime rate for any city its size in the U.S.; in 1969 it had been third for its population group. (Pontiac Press, September 22, 1971)

Fear of crime was aggravated by the media. Ironically, the professionalism of the Pontiac police department contributed to this because all crime was publicly recorded and reported. In contrast, suburban communities did not make this information easily available. Newspapers featured Pontiac crimes prominently and quickly reported violence associated with racial confrontations. Parents who feared for the safety of their children thought they had reasonable grounds for concern based upon reported statistics. Although crime decreased steadily throughout the seventies, the image of the city as crime ridden died slowly.[17] Moreover, crime and violence would continue to be associated with school desegregation in spite of empirical evidence that the schools were safe.

Race contributed to the isolation of Pontiac within Oakland County in several ways. In part, this was caused by a lack of interest among whites in what was perceived to be a declining community. In part, it reflected the determination of blacks to keep Pontiac independent once they had achieved some measure of political strength. For blacks, Pontiac's cityhood provided a symbol of independence and

power. Although Oakland County commanded more economic and political resources in most of the exchanges that would take place between the two units of government during the late sixties and seventies, Pontiac had legal autonomy, pride, a GM tax base, and as the decade continued - political power based on its "poverty" as this was the foundation of Oakland County's social service grant economy. But the strain between city and county also inhibited useful regional planning in many key ares of public life, and weakened many efforts to provide services.

Another source of county-city irritation in the sixties, and associated indirectly with the politics of race was created by mushrooming social welfare programs initiated through the war on poverty and administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Since Pontiac's population was under 100,000 the city was not an independent unit, but part of Oakland County's program. Pontiac, however, was the county's neediest area, and a large number of those requesting help were black. Nevertheless, the Republican County Manager, a strong political figure with considerable white support throughout the County, was in a better position to challenge the weak City Manager in Pontiac on the day-by-day administrative features of programs. Many of the new programs were controversial in themselves, and became more so as relationships between the city and county grew strained.

The Head Start Program is an example of the complicated relationships in some of the programs. According to federal regulations, the OEO could determine the location of such programs in the community, although 10% of the funding for the program was supplied

from local school district money. The OEO wanted Head Start programs located in black neighborhoods, but the Pontiac School District preferred other site locations. When OEO stood firm, the program was viewed as a threat to local school district autonomy. After lengthy negotiations and the assistance of a state legislator, the issue was satisfactorily resolved. However, OEO encountered similar opposition from other established organizations in the county. In 1970, when OEO ended, many of the community action programs were reorganized in a new non-profit agency that covered both Oakland and Livingston counties. OLHSA (Oakland-Livingston Human Services Agency) still operates the Head Start program, as well as several programs for the elderly.

However, most social services in Pontiac and throughout the county, were uncoordinated. One researcher described this as follows:

> There is not now, nor has there been, effective planning of the community social services. Provision of planning effort with strong citizen leadership and adequate staff service is seen as a principal need for the area.
>
> Results of lack of planning are readily apparent. Unneeded programs have been developed with resultant waste of community resources. Many agencies are uncertain about their own functions. They must rely on unilateral decisions made from limited perspectives in planning and programming and perhaps most serious of all, nowhere is there clearly lodged the responsibility for making plans and decisions pertaining to the solution of unmet needs.
>
> Russell Leddy, Report on Community Services of Pontiac, Michigan, 1965.

Two action groups developed on the county level to address some of the concerns over social services. As county organizations they could draw upon the resources of middle class white residents in the

county, as well as poor blacks in the city. First, the Oakland County Welfare Rights Organization officially began in January, 1969. It was led by an outspoken black woman who participated in the growing community group in both the city and the schools. Second, VOCAL, the Voice of Oakland County Action League, also was a voluntary association composed of whites, primarily church oriented volunteers, and local blacks who promised to serve those who needed help. There was some overlap in membership: the Welfare Rights leader, for example, also belonged to VOCAL. In addition, the Welfare Rights Organization formed a support group --Friends of Welfare Rights -- that sought influential supporters to promote their concerns among policy makers. The goals of both groups were to involve citizens in decision making, to make existing institutions more responsive to clients, and to provide help for those in need. Both groups became political centers of influence in an emerging "grass roots" coalition, and both had substantial black membership.

Behler (1976) notes four key developmental decisions in the sixties: 1) a major drain project to control the Clinton River, 2) the trade of the city airport to Oakland County for a downtown building, 3) the adoption of a new income tax law to provide badly needed city revenue, and 4) interest, on the part of a small group of businessmen, in building a sports arena. By 1970 the physical deterioration of Pontiac with an empty downtown and poor housing, and the rising incidence of crime, created a mood of pessimism that would last through the early seventies.

> The attitude of the people regarding their neighborhood, the downtown, the schools, and themselves has been described to the consultant as being very negative, with little vision and hopefulness.
> Walter Perry, March 1973.

During this same period (1964-1970) events in the schools overshadowed most other community activities. This social climate has been well described by the Michigan Civil Rights Commission in June, 1968, in a report on the public inquiry into race relations in Pontiac.

> The physical isolation which has resulted between white and non-white citizens had led to a communications gap of staggering proportions. Civil and governmental leaders show little concern for or understanding of minority-group problems. Negroes and Spanish-Americans grow more and more distrustful of a community they feel is trying to contain them.
> Report and Recommendations from a Public Inquiry into the Status of Race Relations in the City of Pontiac, Michigan. 1968.

Another way of interpreting community events during the sixties is to see many of the conflicts as early attempts to define problems. Residents of Pontiac were aware that something was amiss; racial conflict was intruding in all areas of civic life. Concerns were expressed in many ways: through letters to the editor column, in speeches and boycotts of public meetings, through assistance from "outside experts" who served as advisors to the city and the schools about various experiences, through studies and reports that attempted to explain what was happening. We have already discussed the politics of race in housing, urban development, police relations, and city-county relationships, but the most dramatic examples were to be found in school-community events.

School-Community Relations: 1964-1970

> I think we have to be realistic. In a large number of big-city areas we have a lot of neighborhoods that are going to be completely black. But if we can have good schools and good police protection maybe that's better than having fear and riots. And maybe another generation will have to deal with integration.
>
> Wilbur Cohen, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. Pontiac Press, August 7, 1968.

Although it was clear that the relationship between schools and the community had to change, it was not at all clear how this could be accomplished. Between 1965-1970, three events characterized different approaches to change in Pontiac. First, through planning and professional leadership, with the support of outside funding, the Human Resources Center represented an effort to control and direct change. Secondly, school desegregation may be viewed as an example of outside pressure requiring the district to change. Third, the high school site provides an example of internal demands leading to change. The first is a classic textbook account of enlightened educational planning; the second an example of strong external pressure exerted on a school district to drastically alter the patterns of school attendance, and the third illustrates the effect of "grass roots" concerns on local decisions.

Once again, for analytic purposes, we will discuss each of the three separately, but they were not mutually exclusive. Although the overall direction of change was towards an increase in black political power, different actors were interested in different goals and in the flow of events, these were inconsistent and ambiguous. Change is a

multi-dimensional phenomena with a variety of facets that jumbles events together. Changing economic conditions, the unrest that characterized the late sixties, fear of crime, and the other factors already noted, played a significant part in the dynamics of the controversies surrounding the school issues. Stated another way, we can ask whether educational change can be purchased, or forced upon a school district, or whether it must grow out of local concern.

The Human Resource Center

> If we can bring white and black parents and their children together in one setting with fully enriched educational, social, and recreational programs, there should be a potential environment to improve the total living of residents in that quadrant of the inner city.
>
> Human beings have an almost unlimited potential for growth, for learning, and for self-improvement throughout most of their lives. It is to assist in this life-long development of human talent and human potential that the Human Resource Center concept was born.
>
> Dr. Dana P. Whitmer. Brochure, Human Resource Center.

Explaining the development of the Human Resource Center illuminates how the school district could draw upon external resources to implement programs. It also shows how impossible it was to separate racial concerns from academic policies during this period of black political awareness. Our account is based on two doctoral dissertations written by school personnel, personal papers of the school superintendent, documents and news accounts related to the Center, and

eight interviews conducted in 1980 with persons who had been closely associated with the Center's development throughout the decade.

The idea of a resource center evolved from an immediate problem facing the district regarding the replacement of two obsolete elementary schools located in the downtown area. The concept of a community school that would consolidate several community facilities and improve the educational program at the same time was attractive. Community education had been discussed in the educational literature for many years, and a core of enthusiastic supporters for this educational innovation existed in nearby Flint at the Mott Foundation Institute for Community Improvement. The Human Resource Center was conceived as an educational park that provided both services and education for both children and adults. A unique feature of the Pontiac proposal for the new Center was that it specifically addressed the possibility of stabilizing a transient neighborhood through the physical construction of an education facility, "including the question of ethnic and economic integration" (HUD application, The Desired Outcomes"). Prior to this, decisions about building schools locally had been based upon residential considerations, land availability, cost factors and the concept of neighborhood schools. To obtain HUD funding to build the social services component, the School District had to convince federal authorities that the Center was going to be more than an ordinary school building: it had to be what the title suggested: a human resource center.

Eight other objectives were formally adopted as part of the project. Stated simply, these were:

1. to enrich the educational programs.
2. to provide life-long education for out-of-school youth and adults -- also basic education, vocational training, adult seminars.
3. to provide for recreational, cultural, and social service needs during evenings and weekends.
4. to coordinate social services at the site.
5. to stimulate community pride and "physical rehabilitation of the area."
6. to promote a stable residential area that was integrated both racially and economically.
7. to promote a stable student body that was integrated both racially and economically.
8. to plan a campus center with new facilities.

(Condon, 1970)

In February 1966, the Mott Foundation expressed interest in the Human Resource Center and supported three consultants from Michigan State University and the University of Michigan to examine the proposal. The consultants stressed the need to build community consensus in favor of the project. In April, the Ford Foundation's Educational Facilities Laboratories also expressed interest and engaged an architect to design the building. The fact that within six months two private foundations endorsed the project attests to the political acumen of the school leadership, as well as ease of access to national foundations. Moreover, it speaks clearly to the relevancy of the idea as perceived by educational leaders nationally. The top administrators in the district were enthusiastic about the potential of HRC to contribute significantly to local education.

It is particularly interesting to examine how community concensus was generated. Community influentials, as well as key persons in the school's organizational network were contacted in the following order over a two month period:

1. The editor and publisher of the local newspaper.

2. Three top executives in local General Motors plants.

3. The city manager, urban renewal director, "study" director for the City and members of the City Commission.

4. The City commissioners, Board of Education trustees, and Mott Foundation representatives (a joint meeting).

5. County Council of the United Automobile Workers (presidents of local unions).

6. The City Human Relations Committee.

Finally, by November 6, armed with the Mott Foundation grant, and city commission endorsement, the superintendent, his assistant, and the director of federal projects for the schools went to Washington to test the receptivity of the U.S. Office of Education for support for the project. The School District had made the most extensive effort to develop support for an undertaking that had ever been done in the history of Pontiac.

It is also of interest to examine those formal groups school administrators contacted as part of the feasibility study. Units identified in the city were: planning, youth, parks and recreation, human relations, public works, police, library and health. Also contacted were county service agencies providing direct services such as: The Oakland County Medical Department, Social Services, Community Mental Health, the United Fund, the local community college and university. The Title III coordinator at the state level was also contacted.

City commissioners identified three concerns about the project: (1) How much will this Human Resource Center cost the city? (2) What is to be done about objections received from property owners whose homes were not to be taken as part of the purchase proceedings to acquire land? (3) What will HRC do in bringing about racial stability and an integrated community? (Condon, p. 35)

Commissioners were responding to local racial concerns raised by blacks who viewed the Human Resource Center as a strategy to avoid desegregation. Marie Johnson, a black leader, testified at the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Equality of Educational Opportunity in 1971, "The only reason it (HRC) is racially balanced is due to the Keith decision, not due to the boards' plans or its actions" (U.S. Senate Hearings: 1978, p. 9878). Her charge lies at the heart of the desegregation controversy because it suggests that school administrators deliberately planned HRC (and other school buildings) to perpetuate de facto desegregation. This was strongly denied by school administrators, who noted that the District had not been found guilty of such an offense. Rather, the School District was accused of not trying to offset de facto desegregation. In the case of HRC, school administrators stated on many occasions that the facility would actually improve the integration of the schools because HRC would be a "magnet." Many black parents thought otherwise. They looked around at the racial composition of the neighborhoods from which HRC would draw children, and saw the building as simply a new facility.

Throughout the Fall, 1968, school administrators launched a comprehensive campaign to reach parent groups in the elementary schools affected by the plan. Condon (1970) documents the meticulous planning and scheduling involved in this process. A school administrator was assigned to develop consensus, supported in part, by the Mott grant. Another component of the planning grant was that it also provided funds to support the services of an administrator in city government so that better city-school relationships could be fostered. Several PTA-sponsored meetings, small coffee hours in local neighborhoods, and block club meetings were organized to explain the HRC idea.

It came as some surprise then, when in April, 1969 VOCAL (Voice of Oakland County Action League), a group concerned about racial issues, publicly questioned the degree of community enthusiasm for the project, claiming that the application was "fraudulent in its intent and in fact" (Condon). In particular, VOCAL charged that those community groups dealing with blacks (specifically the Office of Economic Opportunity, NAACP, and the Pontiac Area Planning Council) had participated in name only. School administrators responded by describing the planning process and explaining the differences between HUD's interest in the service component of the project in contrast to the educational component. Condon attributes the VOCAL charges to the growing racial unrest in the community in general, as well as to the length of the planning process. While HRC was being discussed, parents saw no actual building taking place to resolve the problems of the outmoded facilities.

The HRC controversy followed a pattern that was repeated in the high school site and hospital controversies. A planning group, comprised of influential administrators and citizens, design a project, receive endorsements from community influentials (businessmen, GM executives, union leaders, and city commissioners); solicit financial resources through private and federal grants, and at the last moment, are confronted with community ("grass roots") groups who threaten to block the project because they did not participate in the planning. The "planners" are shocked and angry: they point to the amount of work already given to the project (often by volunteers) and note that all the planning activities had been conducted in public with full publicity. With unconscious irony they note that citizen involvement had been actively solicited. The protestors, in this view, are spoilers. But protesters believe the villains of the piece are the planners: the power elite who have already made key decisions. In this view, public statements report only what has already been decided. And to show the strength of their grass roots influence, the protestors threaten to block the project until demands are met.

Why does this pattern of polarization occur, and why is it such a surprise when the controversy surfaces? First, by examining the rhetoric used in these encounters, we see that both sides start out with different assumptions and perspectives about citizen participation. Second, planning, especially if outside funding is required, is a lengthy process, and conditions change from the inception of the planning process to the final project. For example, the racial climate

in Pontiac had changed significantly between 1966 and 1969: black community groups had become more articulate, and the school was becoming a particular focus of discontent as various investigations and studies documented the problems of race relations in educational settings. Third, although early criticisms of projects are often openly expressed, the administrator-planners frequently do not hear the objections. Complaints are often expressed in general and nebulous terms and critics are overlooked or discounted. Fourth, in most cases the opposing or even cooperating groups, have entirely different focal concerns. For example, one of the city commission's central concerns was race relations, but this was not central to the interests of school administrators who were planning HRC as an educational innovation. Fifth, because dissident groups aren't organized for long-term argumentation, they find confrontation to be their most effective tactic to generate publicity. Sixth, issues also promote alliances and coalitions among local groups, and since one issue is seldom isolated from others, the problems escalate and are re-defined. By the time VOCAL complained about the HRC, Pontiac voters had begun to discuss the issue of the "super" high school, the court case on desegregation, the need for black administrators in the system, and the problems of student disorder. So, the HRC became one episode in a new and developing drama.

Obviously, local community politics are never simple. Concerns with rising taxes and safety, for example, are intertwined with racial fears because educational decisions are not distinct from community politics. The Human Resources Center was seen by blacks as a ploy to

avoid desegregation; educators, in contrast, saw it as an important innovation and a contribution to racial integration.

The cost of the Center was high: it required a $4.5 million bond issue, a $1.7 million HUD grant under the Neighborhood Facilities Act, and the private foundation money. In addition, there had to be some architectural modifications to lower costs. It was designed to house 1900 elementary students and 1000 adults. Team teaching, open classrooms, individualized instruction, bilingual education, a desegregated student body and mainstreaming handicapped students were but a few of the new programs to be developed in the Center. A pedestrian street runs through the center of the second floor with agencies on one side and a community lounge, restaurant, offices and adult classrooms on the other. Altogether the Center has 175,000 square feet.

When Williams (1972) looked at the operation of HRC during the two years it had been functioning, he wanted to see whether the concept did provide a unique approach to the problems of urban communities as promised. He thought that the educational approach to the Center was extraordinarily ambitious: combining compensatory education in an educational park. Williams based his study on interviews and surveys with black, white and Latino teachers and community leaders. He found a high level of satisfaction with the operation of the schools, but also concern over the lack of good communications, and some confusion over the educational approach. In light of the eventual shifts in the educational center, some negative comments such as "need for better

building security" and "need for more resources" were indicative of future problems of the program. Williams concluded that:

> The objectives were not unrealistic but were tempered by such things as finances, community attitudes, and an unnatural situation created by public and court pressure for immediate integration of the schools. There is still potential for real benefit to the people of the City of Pontiac (in the HRC project). (p. 157)

In 1980, our interviews with principals and parents suggest some of the reasons why the dream for HRC did not materialize as expected. First of all, the additional resources needed to carry out the innovative program simply did not exist in the district. As money became scarce, HRC could not obtain the level of materials needed to operate innovatively. Moreover, human resources were also hard to obtain; open classrooms and team teaching required dedicated, trained teachers. Experienced teachers had been recruited to go to HRC but had received no additional training. Many began to feel they had been "sold a bill of goods" and bailed out.

A second problem was the size of the school: over 1900 elementary students. By 1980, HRC was divided into two separate schools. And the problems of dealing with a mobile school population were compounded by busing and the desegregation plan in which students were often moved to a different building every year. In 1981 a stabilization program was finally worked out to permit students in the district to remain in one school building from K - 5th grade, but throughout the seventies there was a constant shuffling of students in K - 4 at HRC. Although principals and teachers believe that children adapt to innovation faster

than adults, the constant moving of students and staff placed another strain on resources already stretched.

Moreover, although the idea of having community services in the same facility was intellectually exciting, when adults are in the same facility as young children, there are serious security problems for school staff. Adults wandered freely around the site and those wanting assistance had to hang around the building. Even though elementary classes were below the street service level, it was difficult to keep the two separate. Perhaps if downtown development in Pontiac had progressed on schedule, a thriving and bustling street life could have enriched the Center. But, in fact, downtown remained vacant, and HRC was isolated. Social service agencies also underestimated the costs of maintaining "out-reach" units in the Center and within a few years many withdrew from the site.

Then there were other difficulties associated with the design. HRC had no outdoor playgrounds and without walls, the shift from open to traditional classrooms proved difficult. In spite of its size, HRC was short on space for offices or private rooms. Some of the facilities, such as a music room filled with pianos, lay unused for several years. One observer called the building an architect's dream and an educator's nightmare.[18]

No one can call HRC a "failure": it was a bold idea that attempted many innovative programs and has sustained an interest in experimentation and innovation after a decade. As Williams (1972) noted, the neighborhood around HRC recorded enthusiastic support for

millage increases after the building opened, which he interpreted as an indication of parental support. But HRC certainly could not achieve most of the goals proposed in the initial plan without a continued flow of resources into the district. When these stopped, HRC came to look more and more like the other schools and in fact, was handicapped by its innovative design.

Metz (1981) has described magnet schools as posing unique problems in educational innovation. She notes that "they constitute a series of schools which claim semiformal superiority in the name of greater equity in the opportunities provided to children of different races." But, she shrewdly observed that it is likely that:

> ...most of the magnet schools will survive in name, but that they will gradually lapse as the funds for special staffing formulas and extra materials and programs along with many of their rights to exceptions from district policies of various sorts. In other words, they will gradually lose most support for their distinctiveness from the district, except the symbolic power of their names. (p.35)

Part of the difficulty in evaluating HRC, and the concept of community education as a whole, is that planning has not been based upon an interdisciplinary view of problems. For example, the architectural design of the building was not matched with the social construction of interorganizational relationships necessary if schools and social service agencies were to work together effectively. In addition, serious cooperation would require radical redefinitions concerning what were the responsibilities of schools, welfare agencies, the city, and families. School leaders believed that their responsibility to provide

public education required a large degree of autonomy over educational decision making. City decision makers believed that they had ultimate responsibility for the public good. Individual social service agencies claimed autonomy over certain kinds of issues. And in the midst of all these concerns, lay a basic issue for black citizens: how could they make all of the institutions of the local community more responsive to their interests?

A decade later, the magnificient facilities of HRC still exist, but to many these appear to be more liabilities than advantages in a financially impoverished school district. This may not always be the case.

The School Site

> We are not involved in merely choosing a site; we are involved in the destiny of a city.
> David Lewis, Urban Planner, The Pontiac Press. April, 1969

When urban architect Lewis made this statement he was talking about the site for a new high school to replace the outmoded Central High School building, and his words were controversial. The same kind of statement about HRC three years earlier would have been greeted with enthusiasm by school officials as they approached HUD and private foundations for money to build the Center. In the case of the high school, however, the words had to be interpreted in the context of the politics of race. Between the initial proposals for HRC and the decision to build a high school lay a host of events: two damning studies of race relations in Pontiac, several serious inter-racial

street confrontations that led to violence, and the consolidation of political positions from which black leaders could influence local decision making. Black influence was also enhanced by legal supports put into place between 1964-1966 and a climate of liberal opinion interested in improving race relations. Another factor was media attention throughout all local controversies.

In April 1968, a school millage had been passed to fund a new high school to replace the outmoded Central building. The high school had been part of the five year capital improvement plan proposed by the superintendent a year before and was badly needed. Like HRC, the new high school would draw upon innovative thinking in building design. It would have four separate houses or wings with a common core of facilities in the center (library, cafeteria, shops and athletic facilities). The site selected by the school board for the building was on state land near the mental hospital, on the western edge of the city. This was the plan approved by the ninety members of the School Finance Committee. Black residents believed that this would move the building outside of their control and thus, the fight over the "super school" began.

Lewis' comments had been invited by a group known as The Pontiac Area Planning Council. This group had been formed two years earlier to coordinate planning throughout the city with school district planning. Staff were supported by funding from the city commission and the school district. All members were appointed jointly by these two bodies. Lewis was the Pittsburgh urban planner who had been recommended by the

Ford Foundation for the HRC project. After examing both the central city site favored by black parents, and the hospital site, he concluded that the positive features of the hosptial site were cheap land, it would not involve people to relocate, it would avoid flood and soil problems, and allow the design of an innovative building such as developed at HRC. However, he also noted that a high school located at the hospital site would be isolated, encourage drift out of the city and not relate closely to city cultural functions (The Pontiac Press, November 15, 1968).

Board trustees spoke out clearly for school autonomy in making any site decision, and declared that the hospital site had been the one presented to voters for millage approval and to change the site after the millage vote would be a "betrayal of confidence." Lewis, and others on the Planning Council argued that the high school shoud be "part of a comprehensive action plan aimed at city rebuilding." In response, the trustees argued: "The School Board is elected to govern the educational needs of the total school district not to rebuild the city" (The Pontiac Press, February 7, 1969).

In analyzing community conflicts, it is clear that site conflicts are characteristically the tip of the iceberg. Buildings are physical manifestations of organizational decision making and provide tangible evidence of policy decisons. Moreover, the site issues can be dramatized simply and provide an opportunity for community groups to exercise veto power by blocking or impeding decision making. Organizational walls are most permeable at the point when the

organization has to go out into the community to, in fact, dig a hole. In addition, new buildings play an important symbolic role in community life because they structure the forms of commitment that will direct community energy in the years ahead.

To understand why the school site "exploded" it is important to recognize the growing frustration of black leaders. By and large, these people had still been operating outside the institutional decision making structure of the community. And education was a priority issue.

> The fact that Negro parents are committed to education for their children is reflected in the spontaneous and aggressive nature of their actions. In the area of education, particularly, action has often been precipitated by followers rather than by leaders. Oftentimes the rank-and-file members of the Negro community have not waited for Negro leaders to take the initiative; on more than one occasion Negro leaders have had to sprint in order to lead their followers. This means also that the institutionalized channels of appeal and protest have oftentimes been rejected. Sloan:182

As documented in community studies and during the court case, few positive gains had been made in desegregation since the 1954 court decision. The one black trustee on the school board could not overrule the white members. Blacks saw the central administrative staff as inflexible and unresponsive to their demands; the school board as unrepresentative. The two frustrations came together in a demand for community control

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vigorously implemented. The Citizens' Committee's findings were given added importance by a report by the Michigan Civil Rights Department: A Public Inquiry Into the Status of Race Relations in The City of Pontiac, Michigan also released in June. The Civil Rights report resulted from a public inquiry over the shooting of a black youth by police officers the previous December. The Commission reported that witnesses claimed that the school board took no action toward school desegregation and used school boundary lines to maintain racial separation. This point was generally interpreted as evidence of gerrymandering boundary lines. However, as noted before, the courts did not accuse the district of gerrymandering, "but rather the school district had an obligation to take strong affirmative action to counteract the effects of de facto segregation and, failing to do this, were guilty of 'de jure' segregation." (Letter to Lew Gordon from Dana Whitmer, September 9, 1971.)

The two reports gave black leaders powerful weapons. No one could deny that Pontiac was a city "divided by racial and ethnic prejudices and fears" (Michigan Civil Rights Report, 1968). But the focus of controversy became the school site and not busing. At the February Board meeting, VOCAL staged a sit-in. When six people were arrested, black students staged a boycott of schools. During another particularly acrimonious board meeting, young black students blocked the doors so that no one could exit without hearing their demands. Finally, on March 4, the School Board called for a three-month cooling off period during which the site decision would be reviewed. The superintendent's bulletin contained the following:

> The Board of Education views, with deep concern, the serious problems of race relations and the sharp divisions within the community which have polarized around the issue of the location of the new Pontiac high school. In recognition of these present problems, and their serious implications, it is believed both desirable and necessary that the Board of Education set aside a period of approximately three months for the reappraisal by the Board of the high school site questions. During the reappraisal period the following action will be taken:
>
> Alternative site locations and alternative plans for expanding senior high school facilities will be studied.
>
> Architectural developments for the Johnson Avenue site will be suspended.
>
> The Board will request that the appropriate legislation required for the sale of State owned land to the School District not be introduced until the end of the reappraisal period and on request by the Board of Education.
>
> The Board of Education believes that it must assume responsibility for the ultimate decision which will be made at the conclusion of the reappraisal.
>
> The Board now urges all citizens of the School District, in behalf of the general welfare for all, to join in good faith and unity to end the racial discord that has riven our community.
>
> The Superintendent's Bulletin, March 17, 1970

VOCAL continued to protest the site. The School Board president, who had served for twenty-four years, announced his intention to resign. Further efforts to improve communication between the school board, administrators and black citizens backfired when the superintendent referred to "movement hustlers" in one of his school bulletins. The June, 1969 school board election was exceptionally bitter because the community had become polarized around the site issue. Four days before

the election, a third high school site was chosen, right next to the original high school building.

The compromise site was viewed as a major victory by desegregationists. Boycotts, reports, sit-ins and continuous political pressure had resulted in legitimizing black demands for more participation in educational operations. Perhaps, the most significant lasting outcome was to unify black opinion on the importance of desegregation. Sloan reported that as late as 1967 there was little consensus among black leaders over goals -- whether to struggle for desegregation or to improve the educational quality of existing black schools. But the site controversy consolidated most black opinion.

During the remainder of 1969 the politics of race continued on many fronts. In September, 1969 the school district sponsored a controversial in-service sensitivity training institute known as the Human Relations Institute. Another issue centered upon the appointment of a black administrator. When the school board selected an out of state candidate instead of the black Director of School-Community and Human Relations, teachers, parents and students were angered. They announced plans for a school boycott and circulated petitions to recall the board. Even the local press chided the board for insensitivity. The strength of the opposition convinced the out of town candidate that it would be difficult to work in Pontiac and he refused the position (Letter Oct. 14, 1970). The position remained unfilled until after the court order. Continued student disruptions during September and October caused some school closings.

The Court Case

> There are those in Pontiac who look to the end of desegregation and see integration of people, ideas, values, ethnocentricities. Others see the deterioration of the larger community, white flight to the surrounding countryside, and a return to predominantly one race schools. If the attitudes of Pontiac's school children are a gauge of the end-in-view of desegregation, the realities of integration may prevail.
>
> J. Nebeker. The Desegregation of the School District of the City of Pontiac.

The details of the Pontiac school desegregation case are well known and a succinct account was prepared by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission in December 1972 in a review of desegregation in five cities. Davis et al. vs. School District of the City of Pontiac et al. was filed by three parents on behalf of their children. (Many residents thought the NAACP brought the suit, but this is incorrect.) The parents argued that their children were not receiving an equal education in the district. Federal Judge Damon Keith found that members of the Pontiac Board of Education

> intentionally utilized the power at their disposal to locate new schools and arrange boundaries in such a way as to perpetuate the pattern of segregation within the city, and thereby, deliberately, in contradiction of their announced policies in achieving a racial mixture in schools, prevented integration. (Nebeker)

Noting that the sins of ommission "can be as serious as the sins of commission," the Judge ordered a comprehensive plan for the integration of the public schools "by the revising of boundary lines for attendance purposes, as well as by busing so as to achieve maximum racial integration."

The judge had two sets of data upon which to base his opinion. First, the School District prepared detailed descriptions of school policies and listed eight steps that the school district had taken to promote racial desegregation. These steps involved: General Policies Adopted by the Board of Education, Actions Relating to School Attendance Areas, Selection of Sites and New Buildings, The Long Range Plan for the Improvement of Education and Racial Balance in the School District, Development of the Human Resource Center, In-Service Education of Professional Personnel, Pontiac School District Citizens' Committee on Human Relations, Citizen Study Committee on the Equality of Educational Opportunity, and Black Studies in the curriculum. The second set of data consisted of reports from the study commissions. There was also the precedent of the 1956 case. However, the most convincing evidence was contained in a third set of data: the District's reports on the building program. The new schools built since 1954 set a pattern of separation that was comfirmed by twelve separate boundary changes during the same period. Despite the District's disclaimers, this pattern showed repeated decisions reinforcing segregation.

The Board's neighborhood school policy had outlined the relationship between housing and desegregation in 1955 and had been reaffirmed in 1960 and 1964:

> People shall attend the school which serves the attendance area in which they live, irrespective of race, color, nationality or religious affiliations.
>
> Administrative Policies of the School District of Pontiac 1955, 1960, 1964.

But Judge Keith commented:

> This relationship cannot be passively accepted by School Boards. For a school board to acquiesce in a housing development pattern and then to disclaim liability for the eventual segregation characteristic that such a pattern creates in the schools is for the Board to abrogate and ignore all power, control and responsibility. A Board of Education simply cannot permit a segregated situation to come about and then blithely announce that for a Negro student to gain attendance at a given school all he must do is live within the school's attendance area. To rationalize thusly is to be blinded to the realities of adult life with its prejudices and opposition to integrated housing... The Court believes that the Pontiac Board had and has the power and responsibility to make decisions as to locations of new schools and boundary lines so as to achieve an integrated student body.
>
> Davis et al. vs. the School District of the City of Pontiac et al., 1970.

The actual court hearing opened on January 6, 1970, and final arguments were heard by the Judge on January 20, 1970. Most of the case consisted of cross examination of the superintendent and central administrators. The final decision called for the School District to submit a comprehensive plan for complete integration by March 26, 1970, through redistricting and busing.

Throughout the year prior to the hearing, various plans were proposed to submit to Judge Keith before the date when the case would be heard. Black leaders proposed an open enrollment, voluntary program, but the school district did not formally submit any proposal. As a result, there was considerable pressure on the school officials to develop a plan in less than a month. Moreover, even though the Board agreed to file an appeal, the appeal could not be made until the plan

was submitted. Black leaders believed that the decision to appeal ruined any chance of preparing for peaceful desegregation. They believed that, at this point, local leadership could have made a difference. The School Board and administration argued that all legal remedies had to be investigated.

Parent groups now formed to support or oppose the court's decision. One of these, the Concerned Parents of the Pontiac School District promised that any integration plan would "be a minimal one." In fact, two plans were submitted to the Judge: an open enrollment plan and a comprehensive plan. Judge Keith accepted the comprehensive plan in early April but, the School District made application to the U.S. District Court for a stay of execution of Keith's order. When this was denied, a further plea was entered in the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. This stay was awarded and gave the school district an additional year of uncertainty.

Throughout the hearings many believed that Keith's order would be modified. The scope of the order was surprising to administrators. After all, in 1956 the courts had supported Pontiac's neighborhood schools, and most of the busing litigation or desegregation to date had concerned Southern schools. Board President, Russell Brown for example, defended the school administration by saying: "I think this Pontiac school system is one of the best in the country. I don't find people moving out of Pontiac to find better schools" (Pontiac Press, February 11, 1970).

The School Board election in June 1969 was hotly contested. Right wing groups from outside the city descended on Pontiac, and local white sentiment against busing ran high. One particularly controversial news advertisement paid for by the Pontiac Police Officers Association supported anti-busing school board candidates. Anti-busing school board candidates won easily, but according to Nebeker (1972), the victory of the anti-busing candidates meant that: "Pontiac voters spoke against busing for integration, but they spoke for continued disruptions in the schools and unrest in the community." (104)

The Appeals Court ruling was given in late May 1971, almost two years after this School Board election. The court supported Keith's decision and allowed revised plans to be prepared and resubmitted to the Judge. In spite of organized protests by community groups, such as the newly formed National Action Group (NAG), the Appeals Court made it clear that desegregation, via busing, would come to Pontiac.

The court case was significant for many reasons. It was the first time a Northern city school district had been found guilty of segregation. It was the climax of five years of controversy in the community. Moreover, it was an example of a change forced upon a school district, against the wishes of many influential persons. Studies had documented the separation of races in the community: two separate study groups and two courts had found this to be true. Although the media defined the issue as "forced busing" in fact, the court case is properly an example of "forced change." In the view of black leaders, educational institutions had been so unresponsive to other change

efforts that judicial power was a last resort. The politics of race had moved into the arena of the federal judiciary. It is interesting to note that the State Board of Education remained passive throughout the desegregation suit. As Dana Whitmer was to note later:

> The confusion in a community faced with the necessity for integrating its announcement from officials of government, and the conflicting activities of government has made it virtually impossible for citizens to understand what is required of them, or for local boards of education to know the direction they should take in planning for the years ahead. It has been most difficult for many Pontiac citizens to accept, understand and support the need for Pontiac to integrate its schools while, with several exceptions, all other school districts of the state have no such obligation. Achievement of equality of educational opportunity has been impaired in Pontiac by the absence of such a state policy
>
> Public Hearing on Role of State Agencies in School Desegregatgion, March 11, 1975.

Slawski and I have written about the morality drama that accompanied desegregation.[19] When a school district is "tried" and found guilty of violating the spirit of the supreme law of the land, there is a public recognition of "sin." Pontiac had been accused of perpetuating injustice, had been tried, and sentenced. What was blatantly unfair, in the eyes of many whites, was that hundreds of other school districts had not been tried. People in Pontiac were no more prejudiced than people in the nearby communities. In spite of media claims, blue collar workers behaved with no more racial bias than educated and wealthy whites, even if they could cover up their prejudices less skillfully in interviews. Pontiac, alone, had been tried and convicted. Four years later, when the Supreme Court ruled that cross-district busing to

achieve desegregation would not involve suburban districts (Milliken vs. Bradley), the sense of unfair punishment grew in Pontiac - for this was the interpretation of the decision made by most persons in Pontiac. Part of the response to busing would be a white response to the morality play: as black community leaders sang "we shall overcome" in 1968, whites adopted the same slogan in 1971.

Conclusions: 1964-1970

Educational change has proven to be more difficult and complicated than critics of schools had imagined. Part of the reason for the stubbornness and intransigency lies in the interrelationships between schools and local communities. On the one hand, we have given the legal responsibilities for educational operations to school districts, including the tasks of raising school finances from the local polity. On the other hand, most of the demands for change have come from persons outside the local decision making arena: federal and state governments, national educational associations and business professionals, working outside of public education (e.g., architects, lawyers) and the courts. Compounding this, is the separation between civic government and school governance: each has a different base of authority, and often different geographical boundaries. Within the two domains of schools and local governments, there are also divisions. To speak of schools, for example, is to speak of central administrators, building administrators, program administrators, teachers, students, parents, and support personnel.

In addition local groups seek special representation. Thus,

"community control" requires some clarity about which "community" is meant. The Board of Education legally represents "the community." Groups of citizens often believe that the central administration and school board are insensitive to their concerns. Whether this is true or not is not as important as whether the dissident groups can organize sufficient local support to give political weight to their complaints. In the sixties, black citizens of Pontiac could do this.

The Achilles heel of educational democracy is citizen participation. Throughout the turmoil in Pontiac, fewer than 25% of the eligible voters determined many important issues. In turbulent times, elected trustees may make occasional forays into administrative concerns, but like the electorate, their main power lies in saying no. Although central administrators are constrained by teacher unions and the conventional wisdom of professional education, they, more than others, hold the power to initiate.

The question, then, becomes -- on what grounds do central administrators opt for educational change? There are two grounds. First, pragmatism -- where the best opportunities for resources can be found to meet what has been identified as needs. And second, professionalism, in terms of what has been identified as sound management techniques. The difficulty is that dissident complaints are screened out through both modes of operation.

We suggest that turbulent environments require decision making of a different quality among top management in all organizations. The industrial model is clearly one example. Faced with an educated labor

force, international competition, the need to pay close attention to quality control and to respond to advanced technology, American management must find more participatory modes of operating. These include decentralization, quality-of-work-life circles, fewer levels of supervision, and more attention to quality.

We suggest that a similar concern must be introduced into educational management. Educational leaders are faced with an educated citizenry who expect a good deal from schools; they face growing competition from private education and social service claims for tax dollars; a need to pay close attention to providing quality as measured by achievement scores (not withstanding the bias in such measures), and to respond to new curricular issues that should prepare students for a rapidly changing technological world. Like industry, the lessons of Pontiac call for more participatory modes of management. This is different from citizen participation. The older term "citizen participation" suggests a political check on professional operations; the newer concept calls for sharing decision making with citizens, teachers, and students. It will call for more decentralization of authority, smaller units, and much more flexibility.

In our view, it was not that the educational leaders in Pontiac were not effective prior to the decade 1971-1981: they were. Rather, the politics of race had created an influential group excluded from participation in educational decision making. During the seventies this condition would be corrected because black groups could obtain political control over school board seats, the superintendency and other administrative positions. But the fundamental issue remains untouched:

how to develop more participation in education by all groups - both in the schools and outside.

A second characteristic of school-community relations during this period was the growth of complexity. Turbulence, political pluralism, social change, and new programs contributed to the complexity. By 1967, for example, the following programs were operating in Pontiac:

Federal State and Foundation Funds
in the Pontiac Schools

Source	Time		Amount
1. Vocational Ed Act of 1963	66-67	52,000	
Work Study Equipment	66-67	20,000	
	66-67	7,500	
			79,500
Adult Basic Ed			20,000
2. NDEA Title 8 Apprentice Training	66-67		12,000
3. MDTA - Practical Nurse	66-67		100,000
4. NDEA Title III Linguistic & White	66-67	148,000	33 800
5. NDEA Title III Putnam	66-67		3,000
6. ESEA Title I	66-67		362,432
7. ESEA Title II Library	66-67	512,000	40,830
8. ESEA Title II Self Concept	now to 6-68		111,486
9. Mott Community Schools	66-67		20,000
10. Mott Human Resource Center	Jan-June 67		10,000
11. National Teachers Corps	66-67		85,018
12. Neighborhood Youth Corps (OEO)	now to 1-68		54,100
13. State - Section 12 Reading	66-67		195,000
14. Child Nutrition Act (breakfast)	now to June		5,000
	Total now have . . .		1,132,166
15. Head Start	Summer 67		157,985
16. Head Start	67-68		481,280
17. ESEA Title III Resource Ctr Stdy	67-68		75,000
Continuation of present and new			1,826,431

Speech, Dana Whitmer, Downtown Kiwanis Club.
April 11, 1967.

Desegregation would add to the complexity in the next decade, and cause additional concerns for both school and community leaders.

A DECADE OF DESEGREGATION (1971-1981)

> The ups and downs in the Pontiac School District have usually paralleled the up and down racial tensions in the city during the last several years.
> Pontiac Press, July 21,1971

As 1971 opened, Pontiac was restive. Downtown lay vacant except for one unoccupied office building; the new stadium authority was engaged in legal battles with the City of Detroit (also trying to build a sports stadium). On the other hand, after the 1970 recession, Pontiac Motor sales were the third highest of any automobile manufacturer, second only to Chevrolet and Ford. The first low income housing in years was under construction in the city. The school court case had not been decided in federal court. Racial tension was high.

We have selected five key events during this decade to illustrate the ways in which the events of the late sixties worked their way through the city of the seventies. We based our selection upon the volume of news media attention given to these events, the opinions of subjects interviewed in the network studies, and our own assessment of the long range impact of these five events on the development of the city. They are: 1) busing in response to the court order (1971); 2) the decision to build the Pontiac sports stadium (1974); 3) the decision to maintain Pontiac General Hospital in the city (1977); 4) the beginning of downtown development (1979); and 5) the decision of General Motors to build a plant outside the city in Lake Orion (1980). After we examine these issues, we will try to outline the key issues in

school-community relations that provide the context for our network analyses.

Our account omits many other events in the life of the city and does not begin to capture the complexity of even these five events. However, we hope to show that there was a steady increase in local complexity as residents responded to a variety of social changes, and that certain themes permeated community life. These included: unemployment, federal programs, race relations, regionalism, housing problems, community development and school financing.

Busing

> We are responding to an inheritance of several hundred years of neglect and worse. But the fact that we have very feeble tools to respond, and that the prospects of success may be beyond our generation excuses none of us for not using the limited tools at hand, and in some circumstances, the yellow bus is that limited tool.
>
> Senator Hart, U.S. Senate Hearings.

Most of the people we spoke to in Pontiac regarded desegregation as an event, with a "before" and "after". They did not recognize that it was only part of a process that included a more comprehensive restructuring of race relations in response to the politics of race.[20] In fact, the issues surrounding desegregation were often lost in the furor over busing. In national and local surveys, most whites who oppose busing report that they support desegregation. In their view, busing is seen as a loss of freedom rather than a sign of racism. This distinction

was supported in a study of white working class perspectives towards blacks in Pontiac. Musick (1975) found two issues were associated with busing: loss of control and physical safety. Parents wanted to maintain physical control over their children by keeping them nearby. Physical safety concerns included the actual bus ride, as well as being in some "foreign" or "hostile" neighborhood. They also wanted to keep their children out of trouble because of "the behavior of black students." Musick concluded that, in addition to these fears, white parents opposed busing because the idea of equalizing education opportunities did not make sense. In his analysis of interviews with white parents, many of whom were NAG supporters, he explains their opposition to the court order as follows:

> First, because they do not see themselves as more politically powerful or having more resources at their command than blacks... As far as they are concerned, blacks are getting as much or more than themselves in all areas, including the schools. Secondly, they reject the psychological damage caused by the child's self image. Indeed, many of them feel that they too, have been considered inferior for ethnic, religious and economic reasons. They do not see the black situation as very different or that black needs justify elaborate measures to integrate racially. (121)

As a result, Musick writes that whites wondered what the "real" reason was behind busing. He concluded:

> Some of these fears were based on 'racist assumptions' prevalent in American society toward black people. But others were a result of facing a new and different environment which lacked the 'protection' our respondents had been accustomed to. (122)

Black parents, according to our interviews, supported busing because

they thought that desegregation would achieve equal educational opportunity. Implicitly, they assumed that this would also lead to equal economic opportunity and they were interested in educational outcomes, as well as opportunities.

But how does one measure outcomes in this situation? Desegregation was a social policy and not an academic program. Moreover, educators did not have any agreed upon criteria about learning outcomes. In this bewildering situation, the success or failure of a desegregation program could not be evaluated simply. Local attitudes were often contradictory and unrelated to the intent of the policy being implemented. Educators generally concentrated upon the maintenance of order, the survival of institutional routines, and the practice of traditional or "normal" school procedures. In practical terms, this meant that desegregation was to be accomplished with the least amount of disturbance to the status quo. The Supreme Court decision of 1954 had promised an end to discrimination on the basis of the highest legal morality in the nation, but the busing orders of the late sixties were part of the Civil Rights activism. Busing was a practical strategy to implement the court decision, as well as a response to black demands for participation in local education decision making.

During the past decade the social context of desegregation in the U.S. has shifted dramatically. Today discussions about desegregation are more concerned with educational outcomes than opportunities, and there is very little debate over integration, a program to build positive race relations. The shift in dialogue reflects a shift in

viewpoints about the nature of race relations in the U.S. as well as ways by which black Americans can promote change. The politics of race are played in the electoral sphere rather than in the educational domain, as school desegregation moves away from the central stage.

But in Pontiac, in 1971, the controversy centered upon busing. During the summer, school officials worked feverishly to implement the plan that Judge Keith had accepted and the Court of Appeals had approved. Although there was the possibility that the Supreme Court might reverse that decision, it seemed unlikely. Students were assigned to new buildings, transportation routes worked out, teacher assignments prepared, and new buses purchased.

The events of August and September were high drama. On the night of Monday, August 30, 1971, incendiary bombs destroyed six buses. As smoke poured throughout the sky, the residents of Pontiac watched stunned. Later, the bizarre tale of a Ku Klux Klan plot was made public. A local fireman, an FBI informer, had infiltrated the local Klan group and had warned police of the possibility of violence. [21] Although school officials had plans to use guards around the school buses when the new buses arrived at the end of the month, they had taken no special prior precautions to protect the older buses.

The shock of the bus burnings galvanized residents into action. Clergy, social workers, teachers and citizens recognized that if steps were not taken, the next violence might cause harm to children. Many who were opposed to busing but believed that federal laws had to be obeyed, joined together to support school officials and volunteered to

help with the program. Volunteers rode the buses, patrolled school corridors, and assisted school authorities. Dr. Whitmer, the School Superintendent who had symbolized status quo intransigency to black leaders prior to that moment, became the rallying point for those determined to make busing successful. His calm and determined leadership was greeted with relief by frightened parents.

At the same time that pro-busing volunteers organized, opposition to busing became more strident. Irene McCabe, founder of the National Action Group (NAG), had begun to raise money to oppose busing through all legal mechanisms. A former senior trial attorney for the Oakland Prosecutor's Office, was hired to obtain an injunction against busing. When this failed, NAG organized a telegram campaign to President Nixon, marched, picketed in front of the newspaper and school administration offices and conducted other protests. In response, the Pontiac City Commission, at the request of the PTA Council, passed a "Let's make it work" resolution, and this became the theme of those who wanted to avoid violence. The controversy was no longer a local issue: Mrs. McCabe garnered support from many sources. She spoke to groups all over the U.S. such as: Save Our Neighborhood Schools in Virginia; state legislators publicly indicated support for NAG; right wing political groups promised to help NAG, and media attention almost overwhelmed Pontiac.

Although NAG denied any connection with bombings, there was fear that the bombings were just the beginning of violent protest. The City Commission urged citizens to stay calm, as did representatives from the

Michigan Civil Rights Commission, General Motors, and politicians. Protestors were warned that busing would go on as planned. Hours before a scheduled NAG rally on September 1, Judge Keith stated that "whatever is necessary to carry out this order will be done." (Nebeker

Anti-busing protests culminated in a massive Labor Day rally on September 6, at which NAG supporters urged parents to keep their children home from school. NAG promised to continue their protest by using non-violent means, but fears for the safety of children riding the buses was uppermost in the minds of parents who sent their children to school. Pontiac police and County Sheriffs' patrols were at the bus yards Tuesday morning. At that time, five women from NAG chained themselves to the fence, blocking the bus yard; four other NAG members sat down in front of the buses. When they were arrested, the crowd that had been watching angrily, descended upon the school administration building. National and local news media had a field day. According to Nebeker:

> Both NAG and school officials claimed victory at the end of the school day. September 7: NAG, because attendance was low and there were scattered reports of altercations between school officials; school officials, because all buses made their runs (albeit late in some cases), all schools were open, and the safety of students was maintained. (p. 148)

Many believed that the most responsible persons in the drama were the students, who acted calmly throughout the uproar.

On the second day of school a confrontation at the bus yard was only avoided when Mrs. McCabe asked the pickets to go home. NAG continued to advise parents to keep their children out of school and organized

Freedom Schools. One particularly controversial event took place when representatives from the Pontiac Police Officers Association handed $300 for legal expenses to the NAG women convicted of chaining themselves to the fence. To blacks, this provided consumate evidence of local bias.

NAG's strategy was "the total destruction financially of the Pontiac School District" (Pontiac Press, September 9, 1971). To achieve this end, Freedom Schools were crucial. Since levels of state support are determined on the basis of enrollment figures by the 4th Friday of September, a boycott could have cost the District state funds. There was some decline in public school attendance but, it was not as large as NAG had hoped. Another NAG strategy, to boycott the GM Fisher Body Plant on September 14, 1971, was more successful. NAG leaders thought that halting industrial production demonstrated their political clout. Still another tactic was to dramatize the violence in the schools. In addition to continuous newspaper publicity, NAG members slept outside the school administration office to protest unsafe schools. Throughout September and October, NAG continued to argue that the schools were unsafe. The local papers described in detail accounts of violence, and school officials investigated each report. Gradually, order was restored and by January, school desegregation was an accomplished fact in Pontiac. Although NAG continued to generate national media attention through a walk to Washington, the local response was resignation.

Busing had several different effects on school-community relations in Pontiac. It solidified black politics around desegregation.

Opposition among black politicians was silenced by the majority concerns for the safety of children. The "Let's Make it Work" coalition brought moderate blacks and whites together in a unified political posture.

By and large, the resources to meet what was considered a major crisis in the community's life had to come from within the community itself: state educational authorities and county groups did not assist. The media called the "heroes and heroines" of the day the parents, students, and teachers who "made it work."

The scars of the busing conflict remained open for several years -- not so much from the actual busing of students, but from the years of protest and conflict that preceded the court order. Schools and other social institutions change slowly and painfully: the violence that accompanied the court order provided a shock and created a crisis that forced the local community to respond to the changes that had, in fact, taken place during the sixties. Black political power could no longer be ignored. Busing forced Pontiac to recognize that it had become a bi-racial city..

The Silverdome

> The best thing we can expect is to improve our image. What I am asking is that our name - Pontiac be mentioned.
>
> Peter Tenuta. The Oakland Press, February 15, 1981

The negative image of Pontiac presented in media accounts of busing, as well as the run in crime, unemployment, and poverty in the city,

plunged community leaders into despair. They sought some way to restore confidence. To a large extent building the sports stadium was viewed as a psychological event that could accomplish this end.

The Pontiac Silverdome was officially dedicated in 1975 after considerable controversy over financing. The idea of a sports stadium for metropolitan Detroit began in 1957 when a proposal was sent to the Michigan Legislature to build a sports facility through an Olympic Games Authority (Holman, 1976). In 1962 and 1964, a Detroit stadium was discussed. In 1966, the idea of a stadium was also incorporated in Pontiac in a proposal for downtown redevelopment. However, actual implementation of the idea did not take place until February 1968, when a Metropolitan Stadium Committee organized itself to discuss a stadium located at the junction of two major highways (I-75 and M-59) on land owned by the Pontiac School District. This committee was not authorized by either the governor or mayor of Detroit; it consisted of locally prominent businessmen and the owner of the Detroit Lions, William Clay Ford. By the following year, the group had become incorporated as the City of Pontiac Stadium Building Authority, with members appointed by the city commission.

Detroit reacted strongly to a Pontiac Stadium Authority. The mayor and governor both endorsed a Detroit site for the stadium. When it was clear that by 1970, Ford was ready to sign a contract with Pontiac, Detroit officials used their influence to forestall this by asking the governor to extend the horse racing season so that revenues could be used to hasten building a Detroit stadium. In 1971, Wayne County

revealed plans for a waterfront stadium in Detroit. However, the Pontiac Stadium Building Authority moved quickly to approve a $40.95 million bonding plan to actually build an arena. When this proposal was declared illegal by the Michigan Supreme Court, in October 1972, the Pontiac City Commission asked voters for permission to sell 15.95 million dollars in general obligation bonds. The remaining $25 million was to be raised by revenue bonds. On December 11, 1972 the stadium bonding proposal passed by a narrow margin.

In September 1973, after several lawsuits, the bonds were delivered, and ground was broken. In May 1974, the City Commission agreed to spend an additional $6.5 million so that a roof could be installed. The State agreed to lend $1.6 million but this was challenged in court. In December, 1974, the City of Pontiac borrowed $4.1 million from the Police and Fireman's Retirement Fund and the City of Pontiac General Employees Retirement Fund. The Pontiac State Bank and Community National Bank agreed to provide the rest, and construction began.

City and county disputes over roads were finally resolved by the authority paying $50,000, the city $250,000, and the county $500,000. In 1974, the state agreed to give the stadium an $800,000 subsidy from the horse racing revenue. However, in 1975 and every year thereafter, this subsidy resulted in a heated political debate. Detroit legislators and media resented the Stadium and the move of Detroit's professional football and basketball teams to a site outside the city. They dubbed the $800,000 State funding a subsidy and tried to block its use for Pontiac, although legally, the courts had determined that the funds

could properly be used for the Silverdome since they come from the horse racing fund. However, the result of the annual funding battle was to make many people believe that the State paid for the Silverdome. In fact, Pontiac residents paid almost all of the costs of the stadium.

The stadium is viewed locally as a positive civic response to the negative view of Pontiac brought about by the busing controversy. In naming Pontiac an "All American City" the National League of Cities also linked the two together. It was also the theme stressed in the vote to fund the stadium. According to one city administrator:

> This change in the community was reflected in community tensions in various ways. For example, the Detroit riots that occurred in 1967 also occurred here in Pontiac. And we, like Detroit, ended up with a curfew and very nearly martial law in 1967. Up until the school integration order, there were constant problems of discipline at the two high schools, particularly at Pontiac Central which tended to offer the best example of a changing population mix.
>
> Every year there were very significant incidences of discipline at the high school which resulted in a very large concentration of police forces and forced the closing of the high school for a week at a time. So there was a very public demonstration of racial conflict at the high school that not only the whole Detroit metro area became aware of, but the state, and periodically the nation picked it up on the news wires.
>
> Gary Webster, History of the Stadium.

But the stadium also illustrated the dilemma of Pontiac. As a city, Pontiac had the ability to initiate many large scale projects because of the GM tax base, but support to sustain these required outside assistance. Administratively independent, Pontiac was "de facto" part of north Oakland County.

Since the stadium opened in 1975, the Detroit Lions and Detroit Pistons basketball team have played at the Stadium. Several rock concerts and other stadium events have also been very successful. The stadium is outstanding architecturally.[21] Huge fans hold the dome top up without pillars. It was constructed ahead of schedule and for much less than similar stadiums throughout the country. With a seating capacity of 80,000, the stadium has room for more people than live in the city that supports and maintains it. Unfortunately, it has lost money until 1981. Moreover, two years ago Detroit opened a riverfront stadium. Although much smaller (16,000), the basketball team may return to Detroit and then the new stadium will be the source of competition for the Silverdome.

This succinct history does not do justice to the complications and trials of those interested in building the stadium or the difficulties associated with its development. Without question, the Silverdome was an extraordinarily ambitious undertaking for a city the size of Pontiac. The reason why Pontiac was selected, according to Edwin Anderson of the Metropolitan Stadium Committee, was that the land was available and owned by the Board of Education, and that the city had a bonding capacity of $550 million because GM Truck and Coach and Pontiac Motors were in the city (Holman, 1976).

But the reasons the voters of Pontiac supported such an undertaking are more complex. Urban renewal had left downtown Pontiac barren. Racial confrontations had been well publicized and created a negative view of Pontiac. Building the stadium was perceived to be a matter of

civic pride. Pontiac would show its strength by building something remarkable.

Clearly the costs of the stadium were condsiderable, and some believe the money foolishly spent. It is indicative of the strained relations between Pontiac and Oakland County that the city undertook this major construction on its own. Apparently, a formal request for participation was never made, probably because members of the stadium authority did not think that Oakland County would support the city (Holman, 1976). The state provided assistance reluctantly, and Detroit actively opposed the project. Ironically, although Pontiac had met all the costs of building the stadium, the benefits have gone largely to Oakland County and Detroit. A recent State Department of Commerce study clearly documents this (1981). For example, the 1982 Super Bowl will result in significant tourist investment in the area, more than that associated with the Republican Convention of 1980. Since Pontiac has only a few hotels and restaurants, most of the money will be spent in the suburban areas and Detroit.

The stadium, however, is a great source of pride among city officials. They believe it put Pontiac on the map and showed what the city could do. Mayor Holland credits the stadium for reversing the downward spiral of the community and sees it as the first step in its renaissance.

Another feature of the Silverdome's popularity is Pontiac's interest and enthusiasm for sports. The city has produced a number of outstanding athletes, and the high schools have been known throughout

the state for their prowess. In 1981, then, it is a further irony that although other high school championship games are played in the Silverdome, Pontiac schools no longer have any athletic programs or teams that could participate because of financial problems..

Civic officials continue to state that the stadium brings positive attention to a city badly in need of good publicity. As Mayor Holland observed about the Super Bowl -- "This is not just a football game to the city of Pontiac. This is our chance to show the world that Pontiac has something to offer." (The Oakland Press, January 24, 1981.)

The Hospital

> There has been a reduction in tension and conflict among the races, the community is less explosive.
> William Clark, Urban League Director,
> Pontiac-Waterford Times, May 12, 1977.

If the stadium provided a symbolic center from which the citizens of Pontiac could renew their hope in a renaissance, the hospital issue would become an important symbol of community desegregation. In many ways the controversy over the hospital echoed that of the high school. For several years a committee had studied the problems of the hospital facility. It had fallen behind in the rapidly changing world of medical technology and renovating costs appeared to be more costly than rebuilding. Once again, land on the western side of the City owned by the State was the site for rebuilding that was selected by the planning committee.

But unlike the high school, the hospital issue centered directly

upon control because the proposal included a reorganization plan under Public Act 38 to form a non-profit corporation to raise money for building. According to a local reporter:

> The key in the controversy is control. Opponents of the plan say reorganization would leave Pontiac residents with no way to guide hospital policies.
> Larry Good, The Oakland Press, January 2, 1976.

Opposition to the long range plan was coordinated by the Citizens Coalition. This group had tried to draw together various organizations in the "grass roots" and the hospital issue provided a vehicle to accomplish this goal. According to Coalition leaders, members were responding to concerns of hospital workers who feared the loss of jobs if the hospital was relocated. In the fall of 1975, a petition drive to hold a referendum on control of the hospital was ruled unacceptable by the city attorney. But the Coalition continued to agitate and keep the issue alive. Members scheduled a series of six public hearings for December amd January. One of the City Commissioners, also raised questions about alternatives to the plan in City Hall.

Those who worked on the hospital plans for several years were alarmed at the growing oposition. They believed that the hospital had to be improved or lose accreditation and the City simply did not have the financial capability of raising $80 million. They criticized the Coalition for seizing upon this issue and charged the leadership with ignorance as well as a desire for power. As the head of the community relations department at the hospital said publicly, "After all, who ever heard of John Hooper (Coalition leader) before all this? Now his name is

in all the papers." (Esmo Woods, Pontiac-Waterford Times, November 20, 1975.

The importance of the hospital issue is that blacks and whites were on both sides. The doctors and high ranking hospital staff were committed to the long range plan, whereas less influential staff members and Coalition members were opposed to the plan. A major factor that tipped the scales in favor of the Coalition was the participation of the UAW. After examining the proposal, and responding to concerns from union personnel in the hospital, Ken Morris, Regional Director of the UAW, sent a letter to Mayor Holland stating his views:

> Every indication to the leadership of our Pontiac area UAW local unions up to this point, seems to reflect the fact that the Pontiac City Commission is prepared to turn over the present Pontiac General Hospital facilities to an agency which plans to sever all ties and obligations to the City of Pontiac and its citizens, though leaving the community with the responsibility of picking up the bill.
>
> Ken Morris, The Pontiac-Waterford Times, January 22, 1976.

Mayor Holland quickly responded to Morris:

> May I assure you that we are equally interested in asking the questions which you raised in your January 12 letter to the hospital board. This is the reason why I have insisted that a number of public hearings be held in the community in order for all pertinent information to be available before the City Commission would take any position one way or another on this proposal.
>
> Pontiac-Waterford Times, January 22, 1976.

The Pontiac City Commission came under increasing pressure to re-examine the hospital's long range plan. At this point, the Coalition

was able to obtain more than enough signatures to have the issue placed before the voters. As the May election grew closer and emotions volatile, the city lawyer suggested that the city might finance the plan and maintain control by using a 1933 law, Public Act 94. By using revenue bonds instead of bonds supported by taxes, the City coud raise the funds and keep control of the hospital. However, some proponents of the long range plan continued to argue that the city should not add to its debt by seeking outside funding. When the final vote was in, 27% of the eligible voters had decided the hospital's fate: 5,452 voted "yes," and 4,080 voted "no." The victory was hailed by Coalition members: but the significance of the issue was stated most clearly by Davidson:

> We are not unmindful that black, white and brown people of Pontiac joined together to vote in favor of the ordinance on Pontiac General Hospital.
>
> Pontiac-Waterford Times, August 5, 1976.

The hospital issue also reveals another facet of local politics. Each issue in local politics masks concerns about other issues. On many occassions are provided in the local community in which other problems are trotted out along with a salient issue. This inherent feature of local political disputes diffuses the results of rational consideration of current issues.

After the vote, the City Commission affirmed the Coalition's power by appointing members to a new committee to re-study the hospital issue. Perhaps inspired by the political popularity of the "we own it" theme, commissioners decided to require residency for all city

employees, including doctors and medical staff. Immediately, the medical staff announced a "slow down" unless they were excluded from the residency requirement. Moreover, the doctors protested moves by the Commission to dictate hospital policy and to reshuffle trustees. The Commission backed down.

Several top level hospital staff left. The new study group, with strong representation from unions and the Coalition, re-examined a second report that suggested hospital redevelopment could be undertaken if the City issued $15 million of general obligation bonds. This provided the basis for the final resolution of the issue: a $56 million renovation project for the existing hospital on its original site, and construction of a new ambulatory facility outside the city.

Much of the bitterness of the hospital dispute could have been avoided if the concerns of the "grass roots" groups had been addressed early or the idea for alternative financing had been reviewed sooner. However, the Coalition had been eager to seize upon an issue that would give the organization political legitimacy. Such an issue had to be one that could bring blacks and whites together and result in a clear victory. The hospital, like the stadium, provided visible evidence of the ability of the city of Pontiac to initiate new projects, but in both cases, the cost to local residents was a heavy financial burden. If the costs can be underwritten for the next decade, there is a strong possibility that the city will reap financial advantages from both projects. In addition, from the view of grass roots leaders, by

shouldering the bills, the citizens of Pontiac are assured a voice in determining policies.

At the dedication of the "new" hospital, Mayor Holland recognized the struggle when he publicly stated:

> This hospital project probably brought people closer together than any other thing in Pontiac. All we've got to do now is forget those differences we had and build a people's hospital.
>
> Oakland Press, April 5, 1979.

The hospital issue represented the high point of grass roots advocacy in Pontiac and the legitimization of grass roots politics. It can be viewed as the end of "protest" politics.

Downtown Development

> This moment is not the beginning. It is the continuation of a dream for people who have devoted thousands of hours to rebirth of the City. The Pontiac Plan is part of the vision which goes on beyond, reaching out with opportunities for every citizen to enjoy a fuller and richer life. Those who care about the City of Pontiac have the faith to make it happen here.
>
> Dedication Program, Groundbreaking, November 29, 1979.

In 1946, downtown Pontiac supplied 70% of all retail sales in Oakland County. By 1977 it supplied one tenth of one percent. In 1945 General Motors paid 34% of all Pontiac's taxes, downtown supplied 32% and the rest of the City provided the other third. By 1977, General Motors paid 57% of the City's tax bill. In commenting on the decline of downtown Davidson, author and prime mover of the Pontiac Plan, said bitterly that: "Pontiac is an American institution that has failed." (Pontiac-Waterford Times, October 20, 1977.)

There was good reason for his discouragement. Since 1966, he had tried to persuade city leaders that his vision for downtown was worth pursuing. Initial agreements with a well known shopping mall designer, had come to nothing and efforts to interest other developers came to naught. Although the City had officially endorsed the concept of the Pontiac Plan for diversified development, Davidson was unable to persuade commissioners to move. The project was complicated because it called for office buildings, hotels, stores, restaurants, high rise apartments for the elderly, and recreation and cultural facilities. In 1976 the city's community development director, suggested that the city abandon the Pontiac Plan, although he admitted that no alternative visions for downtown development had been studied. Davidson persuaded the commission to give him an opportunity to market the plan. The Stadium had demonstrated that Pontiac could generate some outside interest on the part of investors, and the commission agreed to Davidson's request for an outside study. This was conducted by The American City Corporation, a group affiliated with Rouse and the new town of Reston, Virginia. Later, Davidson was to explain:

> I have known for years that the powers that be in Pontiac would never listen to me because I grew up right here in this city. Now they have a chance to hear it from the best minds in the nation and they still seem to have difficulty in understanding or absorbing the tremendous opportunities which are clearly available to this city.
>
> The Pontiac-Waterford Times, March 24, 1977.

The American City study found that 90% of the Pontiac Plan was worthwhile and noted that Pontiac was the center of population in a

proven market, but it suggested three stages of development. The initial stage would require the construction of an office tower, hotel, convention trade show center and a recreation center. In all, the Pontiac Plan would involve construction of 12 buildings and a 3,500 space parking structure on 27 acres of land. But the report also had words of caution:

> Regardless of our optimistic view regarding what can be done and what should be done, we are at this moment far more concerned with local structuring of the city's available human resources so that it can be in a position to make the kind of decisions which must now be made. ...There is little sense in talking to major investors and developers until the city of Pontiac has reorganized itself into a decision-making team.
>
> Leo Molinaro, President, American City Corporation. The Pontiac-Waterford Times, March 24, 1977.

City Commissioners were disappointed that the study did not contain a commitment from the American City group to develop the land. But Davidson suggested forming an independent development group that eventually consisted of three separate corporations. This development consortium received support from the new city manager, Phillip Mastin. Mastin had strong political connections throughout the State and was committed to downtown development. He promised to share all the information about the American City study with the public.

Two key ingredients were necessary to make the project a reality. The first was participation by General Motors. GM already occupied almost 80% of the business and industrial property in the city, but GM's participation in the office headquarters gave the plan a major boost. One of the conditions attached to the office building by GM,

however was the construction of a hotel on the site at the same time the office building was built. This proved impossible and GM removed this restriction.

The second ingredient was federal financing. A UDAG grant was used to pay in part, for the construction of a parking structure. Pontiac met the UDAG criteria for urban aid. These included 34% housing stock older than 1940 (Pontiac had 47% in this category); a per capita income growth between 1969 and 1974 of less than $1,433 (Pontiac's was $1,042); a population growth of less than 14% (Pontiac's was 9%); an unemployment rate of 7.75% (Pontiac's average was 18.6% throughout the decade); a growth of job market between 1967 and 1972 of 61% (Pontiac had a loss of 7.4%) and a percent of population below federal poverty lines of 11.1% (Pontiac claimed 13.5% in 1975). Still, need alone would not have generated the UDAG grant. The political campaign of 1980 found Jimmy Carter most anxious to obtain the labor vote, as well as hold onto the urban and minority vote that had propelled him into the White House in 1976. U.S. Senator Riegel used this opportune moment to obtain a $6.5 million UDAG grant. When he announced the award, Riegel noted:

> Pontiac, a city with 1/18th the population of Detroit, will have proportionately much greater infusion of public and private capital than that which signaled the rennaissance of Detroit.
>
> Donald Reigel, Oakland Press, August 31, 1978.

The warning found in the American City report, however, was also important. To re-build downtown, Pontiac had to create a coalition of leaders from individuals who did not have a track record of working together. Mastin soon found himself pushed out of the City Manager's

job, and served as head of the Downtown Development Authority for a few months. Davidson, the spearhead of the project, was voted out as chairperson within a few months of the groundbreaking. Other prime movers resigned. There seemed to be no end of squabbling and in-fighting and funding disasters.

At the dedication for the New Pontiac, the authority estimated the following gains to the city.

> Undeveloped, the site is worth practically nothing, but private investments of a projected 100 million dollars in future years, at 65.81 mills tax base, could produce over 3 million dollars in tax increment revenue yearly. Payments on the bonds, from tax increment, will come to approximately 1-1/2 million dollars yearly, leaving an amount in excess of 1-1/2 million to be used for future development and extension of the project area. Tax increment revenue must, by law, be used by the Downtown Development Authority for the project and not by the city for any other purpose.
>
> The State of Michigan has approved a 2-1/2 million dollar grant to be used for construction of a multi-modal transportation center. An applicaton for a 6.3 million UDAG grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development is still pending*, and an Economic Development Administration as well as an Urban Park grant for landscaping are also possibilities.
>
> Building Dedication Program, November, 1981.

*The grant has subsequently been awarded to the city.

Another major goal of downtown development was to diversify the city's economic base by regaining its role as a center of Oakland County. In our interviews, residents overwhelmingly cited downtown redevelopment as the most optimistic trend for the future of Pontiac. Although there were some second thoughts on the day of the dedication as residents contemplated a gloomy automobile economy, on a whole, the theme of a Phoenix rising from ashes appeared an appropriate symbol of Pontiac's recovery. Only Davidson quipped, it could also be thought of as a dead bird.

General Motors and "The Move" To Lake Orion

> And many will wonder why we ever allowed every lake and stream in Pontiac to be polluted by heavy industry. And why did we allow our street patterns to conform to the needs of industry. And why did we suffer the slashing railroad tracks across one neighborhood after another, and why did we gear every nickle and dime of city taxes for 70 years to try to maintain an industry that would one day announce, "Goodby, Pontiac, we have found greener pastures in Orion Township.
>
> Don Davidson, Editorial, The Pontiac-Waterford Times. March 20, 1980.

These bitter words were later withdrawn by Mr. Davidson after a series of exchanges with Charles Cyerly, the Regional Manager of General Motors Public Relations Staff. (Pontiac Waterford Times, March 27, 1980). But they are indicative of the frustration and sense of helplessness that followed General Motors' announcement on January 31, 1980 that a new assembly plant would be built outside of the city. The public announcement before the Oakland County Board of Supervisors caught most citizens in Pontiac by surprise. During the next few months, events as dramatic as those associated with busing at the beginning of the decade took place, and the consequences for the people of Pontiac were just as serious. Like busing, the Lake Orion move was the climax of circumstances that had been building for many years: international competition, a lag in automotive productivity attributed to a decline in capital investment, the energy shortage, a market for small cars, federal emissions regulations and other problems that plagued industry. As General Motors executives watched the decline in domestic sales while foreign competition grew, they decided to launch a

massive capital-building program. For years, General Motors had been locating new plants near new markets and away from Detroit: for years it was also clear that a major redesign in products was necessary. In 1980, the trends caught up to Pontiac.

Occasionally there had been speculation about GM moving out of the city, but this was an unthinkable idea and fears were brushed away. The corporation had invested so heavily in facilities located in the city that moving seemed unlikely. Even rumors about an automobile company looking at land in nearby Orion were discounted or attributed to Volkswagon (General Motors purchased the land through Argonaut Realty and Grand Trunk Railway). According to Oyerly, General Motors decided on the site in late October, 1979. However, many in Pontiac found this hard to believe in light of the corporation's reputation for long-range planning. Once the decision was made, G.M. wanted to move quickly. Oyerly replied to Davidson:

> We have built plants in a hurry, but never, in General Motors' whole history, have we tried anything quite like this -- replacing outmoded plants with new ones in the same area.
> The Pontiac-Waterford Times, (Feb. 21, 1980)

For example, GM proposed that government agencies approve the following within five months: (1) Orion Township Approvals: Act 198 Tax Abatement, Building Permit, Site Plan Review, Site Plan Height Variance, Grading Permit, Wetlands Permits, Railroad Rezoning, 30 Acre Rezoning; (2) City of Pontiac Approval: Act 198 Tax Abatement; (3) Oakland County Approvals: Act 347 Soil Erosion and Sedimentation

Control, Giddings Road Vacation; Federal Approval: Section 404 Dredge and Fill Permit, RCRA Permit (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act); (4) State of Michigan Approvals: Building Permit, Prevention of Significant Deterioration, Volatile Organic Compounds, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

An example of the timetable for the site plan review is as follows:

> May 14: submit site plan to Orion Commission, submit height variance to Zoning Board of Appeals
> May 21: Commission accepts plan
> May 27: ZBA accepts variance application
> May 31: Commission visits site
> June 4: Commission studies site plan
> June 18: Commission gives conceptual approval to site plan.
> June 20: ZBA approves variance
> July 2: Commission studies final site plan
> July 16: Commission approves final site plan.

(Corwell, 1981:p.31)

The speed with which GM moved is awesome and testifies to the power and influence of the corporation. Within five months GM had managed to change environmental and planning rules, obtain significant tax advantages, find support for roads, sewers, water and other necessary amenities, and overcome environmental protests. But the June 1 "ground breaking" goal was delayed until August because of a referendum placed before Orion Township. General Motors officials were somewhat surprised that there was some protest about their proposed plans.

To understand how General Motors could implement the building program so swiftly, it is only necessary to point out that in the public's mind 7,000 jobs were "on the line." Southeastern Michigan was already reeling from the auto recession, and Pontiac in particular had experienced a high rate of unemployment for a decade. Fear of a GM

move cut deeply. Although GM officials denied that they ever threatened to leave Michigan, Pontiac area residents conscious of GM's option to leave; and the media stressed this threat constantly. For example, Davidson wrote in February:

> I am informed by Mr. Charles Oyerly, Regional Public Relations Manager, and Robert Stempel, General Manager of Pontiac Motors Division, that it is highly probable that if GM does not build on the Orion Township site the plant will be built in another state.
> Pontiac-Waterford Times, February 21, 1980.

This same fear, expressed in simpler words, could be found in many letters to the newspaper. One woman wrote:

> I am very upset with the front page news depicting General Motors as the horrible monster devouring the innocent people of Orion Township. The residents of Orion Township had better stop and think about what they are about to do. There are 7,000 families in this area whose livelihood depends on GM. General Motors is doing us a great favor by staying in this area instead of moving to the other side of Michigan.
> Letter to The Oakland Press, D. Tuttle, March 17, 1980.

The conflict between opponents of the GM "expansion" (as the move was later called), and proponents, however, was more interesting as a study of GM power than of organized protest. The site chosen by GM was semi-rural land, occupied in part by the Oakland-Pontiac Airport. The Grand Trunk Railway had been given an option on this land by the Oakland County Commission. Some citizens were outraged that the option had been given without public approval. Pilots using the airport also protested the loss of airport land. But the strongest protests came from environmental groups (ACRE-Area Citizens for a Rural Environment) who argued that the plant would disrupt the orderly development of the township and cause environmental damage.

One particularly strident voice concerning the possibility of GM moving should the environmentalists bring a lawsuit, was that of William Boyd of the State Department of Commerce. He stated publicly:

> You can be assured of one thing: that plant is going to be built someplace. Orion Township is the only site in Michigan where it can go. (Feb. 21, 1980)

The Lake Orion move was actually only three and a half miles outside the city limits. Since the school district is larger than the city, taxes from the new plant would support both Pontiac schools and Lake Orion schools. The most severe loss of revenue would be for the city: first, from a decline in income taxes levied against workers employed in the plants, and secondly, from a decline in property tax if the empty facilities lay vacant and unused. For example, a loss of 5,850 jobs from GM employees on indefinite layoff in 1979 cost the city $1.78 million in income taxes. Another impact could be psychological fall-out: just as downtown building signaled the redevelopment of the city some feared that the GM move could reduce enthusiasm. In the words of Jose Santiago, interim city manager:

> This could put a damper on the recent progress the city has made. The city is just recovering from a deficit position and is back in the black. As far as city services, this was going to be a very lean year in Pontiac, and this will make it worse.
> Jose Santiago. The Oakland Press, February 1, 1980.

The effect of the announcement on Pontiac was twofold: First, it dramatized the city's dependence on GM and made residents aware of the importance of the industrial giant, as well as their helplessness to

affect GM policy. Secondly, it emphasized what had been happening throughout the past two decades: North Oakland County, not Pontiac, had gradually assumed the economic, political and social importance that Pontiac once had. There had been other signs: The Pontiac Press had become The Oakland Press to appeal to a wider audience; county facilities had moved from downtown Pontiac to the outskirts of the city; the county executive had grown in power and influence for over a decade, particularly using the political clout of federal funding for social service programs such as CETA. The GM move made regional development clear.

Estimates of GM's impact on Pontiac are difficult to separate from the corporation's regional impact. For example, in 1979 the corporation employed 39,218 people with a payroll of $962 million. GM spent approximately $1.1 billion annually in the local area. The second figure includes $180 million spent on materials from 2300 local suppliers. Over $1 million was also paid out to employees for suggestions alone. Other spending included: advertising, building (such as the new Pontiac Motors Corporate headquarters in north Pontiac), and indirect effects on local small businesses. Also, GM employees contributed $1.5 million directly to the Pontiac-North Oakland United Way. Within Pontiac, top GM officials served on voluntary boards; (occasionally a GM employee is "loaned to the city" for special projects such as the Superbowl festivities), and participate actively in community events.

To improve GM-Pontiac relations, in September, 1977 the Pontiac Motors Division public relations staff hired a special community relations director to work closely with the community. Her assignment was to stimulate employee top management participation in Pontiac life, to have closer identification with the Pontiac Silverdome, the Downtown Development Plan, and the local press; to build ties with City Hall; to participate actively with The Pontiac One Hundred Club (an influential association of city leaders), and to speak before community groups. In addition to accomplishing the above goals, she also established contact with the Latino community and other grass roots groups. Because she faithfully appeared at local meetings, she gained the trust of several grass roots organizations in two years. Local leaders saw her presence as an entree into GM.

The community relations director liked to call her assignment one of "humanizing the corporation." Although the program ended in 1981, the good will developed in the community relations program helped GM in Pontiac considerably during the move to Lake Orion.

According to Michigan law, a city losing a major plant must approve the plant move before the company can obtain state tax concessions for the new facility. When this question was put to the Pontiac City Commission, approval was given quickly. The speed with which the move was approved, and the lack of questions startled some observers. They attributed this to the fact that five out of seven commissioners were employed by the corporation. City commissioners vigorously denied any conflict of interest. Like most other decision makers, they felt the

powerful argument was that it would be better to have the plant three and a half miles away than three hundred miles away. According to Mayor Holland,

> We want to see any assembly plant in Pontiac or so close to Pontiac that we can touch it. We will do whatever we can to protect our industrial base.
> The Oakland Press, February 19, 1980

In addition to Pontiac's approval, according to law, (to obtain tax abatement concessions) GM had to show that an increase in jobs would accompany the new plant. The corporation stated that 5,200 workers would be employed in two shifts. Since 7,000 workers were employed in the two plants being replaced, the additional numbers were to come from "support employees" (The Oakland Press, March 12, 1980). Critics questioned GM figures from the start, since the major advantage of a new facility would be to use high technology more effectively, replacing workers with robots and other sophisticated industrial manufacturing processes. However, regardless of the numbers in the plant, the estimate of two and a half jobs in the community for every one in the plant increased all calculations.

GM had to gain approval in Orion township too. In moving quickly, the usually smooth GM public relations operation was caught off guard. The announcement was made a month earlier than planned because the media found out about the site. The first announcements stimulated rumors. In addition, early public information meetings did not go well. For example, one newspaper account said that:

> Residents left knowing little more than when they arrive Tuesday night to hear plans for the new Pontiac Motor Division Assembly plant near Silverbell and Giddings Road."
> (Oakland Press, February 20, 1980)

It could be that GM did not anticipate opposition in Orion until the Oakland County supervisors warned them of this at the meeting on January 31. According to Albright (1981) the Orion opposition had three facets: first, anger at the way GM handled the site selection - with no warning to township officials; second, efforts by small plane operators who would be forced to shut down if the airport land was given to GM, (one operator filed an unsuccessful suit against the County); and thirdly, environmental protests. The goals of ACRE, Area Citizens for a Rural Environment, were to stop the plant altogether. Members argued that the plant would destroy the semi-rural environment of Orion, raise taxes, and have other harmful environmental effects, particularly because of extended sewers and road development. The ACRE group controlled a potent weapon the threat of environmental law suits that could tie up site negotiations in months of litigation. GM's strategy was to prevent such a suit, and to this end, undertook a massive campaign to influence Lake Orion residents. The strongest supporters in the campaign were UAW employees who organized to save their jobs.[23] GM opened a center in Lake Orion to provide information on the site. Public presentations were made for all community groups. Pressure on environmental opponents became so intense that even legitimate questions were taken as attacks on the project and as threats against the 7,000 jobs. ACRE members were

pictured as agents of Chrysler or as troublemakers who preferred frogs to families. The press was overwhelming in their support of GM and headlines from the Oakland Press read as follows:

> TAX GAIN CITED FROM GM PLANT: MOVE TO ORION FANTASTIC NEWS: GM ORION PLANT VITAL TO BUSINESS: GM OPPONENTS SELFISH: ACRE WON'T STOP GM WITHOUT SUPPORT: FINANCIAL DISASTER IF GM LEAVES AREA. (March-August, 1980)

Another reason for the overwhelming support given was that GM stressed constantly that it was not leaving Pontiac, but would refurbish existing facilities in the city. As noted before, instead of referring to a move, the corporation was called Lake Orion an extension of facilities.

Although ACRE did not file a legal case, members did collect enough signatures to call for a local referendum on the plant. In Orion township, support for GM was overwhelming - 90% of the voters supported the plant and immediately after the August 6 vote, ground breaking took place. The total cost of the plant, including sewers and railroad sidings, will be $500 million. GM estimated that the corporation would pay $400 million and the rest would be shared among the Grand Trunk Western Railroad, Detroit Edison, Consumers Power, Oakland County, Orion Township, the City of Detroit, and the State of Michigan.

In December, 1980, General Motors announced that Cadillacs would be built in the Orion assembly plant. Plans to build a new Cadillac factory in Detroit had been slowed by militant opposition from the residents in Poletown. The Cadillac plant, in Detroit as in Lake Orion had been strongly endorsed by all persons in government including the

Mayor of Detroit, but opposition was more powerful than ACRE. In Poletown GM's expansion required homes to be torn down, whereas in Orion the land was vacant. The announcement of Cadillac production troubled union members in Pontiac because it was no longer clear that Orion jobs automatically would go to displaced Pontiac workers. GM had never publicly stated what kind of car would be built in the Orion plant, several different models will be assembled in the one facility. The enormity of the plant - three million square feet - suggests that this is entirely feasible. Moreover, as the automobile industry continued to decline as a result of high interest and inflation, GM slowed down plans to build the Detroit plant (as well as others throughout the country).

Some of the concerns of the residents of Pontiac were quieted in August 1980, when GM announced that the two Pontiac plants would produce parts for a new two-seater commuter car. Santiago noted that since the plants would be highly automated, they would be more valuable and generate more tax dollars for the city (Oakland Press, August 17, 1980). But he was aware, as were most of the residents of Pontiac, that tax dollars would not compensate for loss of jobs.

As the decade closed, leaders could point to some remarkable accomplishments: a new $150 million, 26 acre "New Pontiac Plan" for downtown had been initiated, and two office buildings, a parking structure and a transportation center were well underway; the 1982 Superbowl would be played in the Silverdome, bringing national attention to that facility; Pontiac General Hospital was completing a

$56 million expansion; the crime rate was significantly lower than it had been ten years earlier, and the bitter conflicts over desegregation were past. On the other hand, economic conditions were foreboding: unemployment was high and probably would go higher, the schools faced a severe financial crisis, and the personal security of many residents is threatened by social spending cuts.

ASSESSING THE DECADE

> Things aren't what they're supposed to be, but they're better than they used to be.
> Milton Henry. The Oakland Press, January 12, 1981.

An assessment involves judgment, and as such is controversial. We have outlined what we believe to be the themes of unemployment, federal programs, problems of race relations, school financing, creating better housing, building physical structures such as the Silverdome, the hospital, and Downtown Development, and the transformation of the workplace. Few would deny the importance of these themes, but it would be difficult for different persons and groups in the community to agree on priorities in assessing the salience of each problem or issue. It is doubtful, for example, that those citizens concerned with schools would be prepared to place education after hospital care. Moreover, some people would deny that there are problems of race relations or, would downplay difficulties with housing. One of the difficulties of living in a complex world is that so many phenomena are taking place at the same time that it is almost impossible to comprehend the whole.

We have mentioned interrelations throughout this discussion because it is the dominant chararacteristic of community life in Pontiac. We also speak of complexity, to refer to conditions in which there are many options or choices, each having consequences upon actions or inactions that can be taken. In a complex environment, it is difficult to calculate how to make decisions because there are unintended

consequences of every choice. There are also external pressures that operate upon decision makers. These compound internal pressures and local conflicts within any given social space. Although all choices are bounded, limited by time and space, in complex situations there are implications of wide scope or effect, as well as multiple levels of analyses that must be considered.

Because Pontiac has become more complex each year, what happens in the schools cannot be thought of as independent from what is going on in the community, and vice versa. Busing was not simply an educational issue: it was a legal, political, social, economic, and moral issue. The decision to use tax money to build a stadium meant that money could not be used for other purposes. At the same time, efforts to rebuild downtown are not going to be effective if public education is in a shambles. Such statements are self-evident, but, in fact, schools, city government, industry, and other institutions within the community operate quite independently of each other. There are no formal planning mechanisms to enforce coordination. The legal system preserves institutional autonomy by legitimizing the separate spheres of each unit. Moreover, those in charge of any institutional domains, such as education -- the institutional administrators -- operate in such a way as to maximize organizational advantage and preserve autonomy. The one exception is the civic polity. The political process remains the single forum where public priorities and values can be debated and selected.

To explain the different responses to local complexity, however, we must examine some other events in Pontiac during this period. From a

sociological perspective we would argue that throughout the decade local leadership was trying to find mechanisms to cope with complexity in a turbulent environment. The turbulence was caused, in part, by the rapid shift in of Pontiac's industrial and commercial base by the rise of community groups that wanted to be represented in local decision making; and by the opportunities and constraints offered by external groups, particularly federal and state agencies. Local leaders responded to all of these conditions at the same time, in different ways, with mixed results.

One factor that has contributed to local complexity has been federal and state programs. All local institutions in the city actively participated in federal programs that range from housing support to senior citizen lunch programs. A bleak assessment of the effect of these on the city is as follows:

> Pontiac has been eligible for and has participated in virtually every major urban initiative since 1958. The end product of the millions of dollars expended over the past 22 years has been the city's dubious distinction as HUD's number one distressed city.
>
> A Small City's Hands-On Impression of The Regan Budget and Economic Philosophy, City of Pontiac, August, 1981.

Several theories have been discussed to account for this evaluation locally. One is that the city was not organized well enough to target program priorities and create an overall development program. In part, this was because of the political struggles among community groups to participate in decision making. Local divisiveness continued throughout the decade, making it difficult to achieve consensus on issues. Another

view is that federal programs were so complex and uncoordinated that it was impossible to utilize them effectively. This was compounded by federal guidelines that required "unreasonably long time frames and unpredictability," contained no incentives to save grant dollars, and in the end, "had the contributory effect of helping reduce the tax base and investment opportunities within distressed areas." (Ibid., p. 2)

A third view is that Pontiac did not have the administrative competency to handle the variety and size of many ambitious projects. Behler disputes that assessment and noted the capable staff specialists who began to develop economic initiatives by 1974 (Behler: 1976). The opposite view was stated by the editor of The Oakland Press as he commented on Pontiac's housing programs:

> How a city like Pontiac is simply not organized, politically or managerially, to run neighborhood improvement programs of this magnitude. It's clear from this story that no one every had a firm grip on Pontiac's total housing effort.
>
> How well-meaning people, politicians and others, cannot arrive at the most basic kind of agreement on what needs to be done and in what order.
>
> How the federal government, once it turns over millions of dollars for housing aid, lacks the clout to see that the follow-up is proper.
>
> Nor can the city staff take all the heat. Buffeted from all side by community groups, local elected officials and the feds, the paid help often lacked priorities and were incapable of keeping all the factions happy.
>
> Bruce McIntyre, Editorial, The Oakland Press, February 3, 1981.

One result of federal and state programs was an unprecedented demand for information from local communities. In some cases a new source of authority and political influence was created on the basis of access to

grass roots information. Representatives of locally indigenous people had an opportunity to obtain bureaucratic positions. The resulting shift from tradition, habit, instinct, and personal morality as the foundations of politics, to organizational, rational and information based activities is reflected in a variety of reports in Pontiac. Moreover, recent research suggests that record keeping has definite consequences in defining problems because records are pro-active and they act upon information as well as organizing data.[23]

Another impact has been to create political power among "grass roots" leaders in the community. These are semi-official spokespersons who represent a variety of interest groups and ideological views. Government requirements for citizen participation reinforced the influence of these groups, made their issues legitimate political concerns, and contributed to the diversity in political leadership.

One response was to seize the initiative and build physical structures that the city could control and openly direct. Advocates for the projects also believed that the new facilities could provide jobs for local citizens. Another strategy was to cooperate with more powerful institutions to try to gain advantage, as was done by supporting GM's move to Orion. A third strategy was to resist changes or comply reluctantly, as in the case of busing.

Another response was that of protest. In the politics of race, protest was successful because it was supported by legal authority. During the seventies, protest politics shifted to the ballot box. However, black leaders have been handicapped because of the low rate of

political participation among black voters. This is a nationwide phenomena.

> . . . The full realization of black political power continues to be hampered by low registration of black voters (half of the nearly 14 million blacks who could have voted in 1972 were not registered) and inadequate enforcement of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 . . .
>
> Newman et al. Protest, Politics and Prosperity.

Another example of this problem in Pontiac is to note that 11% of the electorate voted to change the city charter from a city manager form of government to a strong mayor form of government. Of 40,000 eligible voters, the final vote was 2,245 in favor and 1,861 against. The charter will go into effect next Spring. (The Oakland Press, September 21, 1981).

There is always the option of doing nothing, but this is only a satisfactory response when those concerned are not articulate, or when the problems do not respond in spite of known efforts. For example, crime remains an important concern among residents. In a survey of citizens conducted in 1977, it was given the highest priority:

RANKING OF ISSUES

1. Protecting persons & property
2. Redevelopment of downtown
3. Repairing local streets
4. Preserving existing housing
5. Promoting new housing development
6. Promoting commercial and industrial development
7. Providing tax breaks to keep industry here
8. Cleaning up the City's polluted lakes
9. Building a satellite clinic outside Pontiac for Pontiac General Hosptial
10. Parks improvement and expansion
11. Improving downtown parking

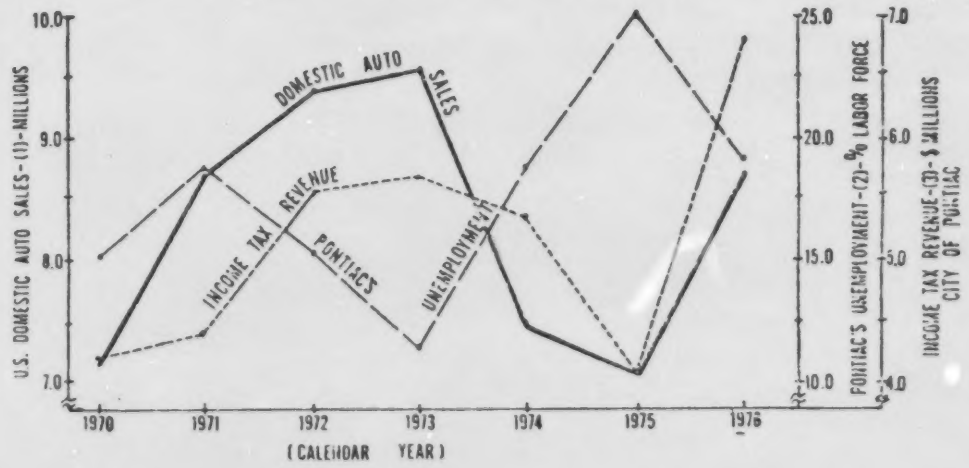
Pontiac Survey, 1977, Question #23.

The police have made some headway against crime. In 1975, crime decreased for the first time since 1972. Moreover, 55% of those surveyed in 1975 thought that the police department was "getting better" (Press Release, Police Department, 1976). But crime has proven to be a stubborn problem facing all urban areas, and Pontiac continues to work on this concern. Another stubborn problem is housing: surveys, studies, plans, discussions, and programs continued throughout the decade with little visible success.

From our perspective the problem of unemployment is the most serious and difficult issue of the decade. The employment rate in Pontiac has remained higher than that of the State or the nation. In three years, 12,000 jobs were lost to the city. Of the 65,000-70,000 jobs located in Pontiac, (30,000-35,000 in manufacturing), over 40,000 were held by non-residents. Moreover, the kinds of jobs available have changed.

Pontiac had become totally dependent upon GM, more so than any other city in Michigan. The cyclical nature of this dependency can be seen by the following:

AUTO SALES AND PONTIAC'S ECONOMY



SOURCES (1) AUTOMOTIVE NEWS
(2) MICHIGAN EMPLOYMENT SECURITY STATISTICS
(3) CITY OF PONTIAC INCOME TAX DIVISION

Various strategies have been used to deal with unemployment, largely training programs. However, these were not effective for many reasons. CETA jobs, for example, were not targeted at private industry. As a result, they were vulnerable to government cut-backs beacuse they were not perceived as essential. In addition, the kinds of training workers received could not prepare them for the transformation of the workplace that would take place in the advanced technological era of the eighties. As the chart above illustrates, industry can no longer provide jobs for the number of people seeking work in Pontiac, and the kinds of jobs available in industry require technological skill and advanced education.

PERSONS EMPLOYED IN CITY OF PONTIAC
BY EMPLOYMENT GROUP

	1970	1975	% Change 1970-75
Automotive Manufacturing	35,137*	25,461	-27.5
Other Manufacturing	1,675	1,749	+ 4.4
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	1,316	1,616	+22.8
Wholesale Trade	825	1,172	+42.1
Retail Trade	5,718	7,100	+24.2
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,493	1,587	+ 6.3
Business Services	7,286	8,051	+10.5
Public Administration and Services	10,989	15,225	+38.5
Construction	812	544	-33.0
Agriculture and Natural Resources	112	73	-34.8
TOTAL	65,363	62,624	

*Excludes 10 week GMC strike.

Southeast Michigan Council of
Governments (SEMCOG) Report, based on
Michigan Employment Security Commission Data, 1977.

The problems of unemployment became obvious by the end of the decade although they affected Pontiac throughout this period. GM's decision to reindustrialize affected one-sixth of all employment in the city, not counting workers on temporary lay-offs. In addition, workers lost jobs when the State phased out Clinton Valley Hospital. By May 1980, Pontiac's unemployment rate was 26.4%. More importantly, there is little indication that the rate can be reduced in the short term. City planners are optimistic, however, that it will be reduced over the long term because of GM's reinvestment, the city's plans for economic diversification, and of the possibilities for new opportunities in the sixth richest county in the U.S.

GM is a party to all local decisions whether the corporation officially participates or not. A decision not to participate means that top leaders do not use their talents for the activity, the project is given lower priority by other community influentials, access to other groups is diminished and local decision makers are weakened by the absence of the strong partner.

Another significant trend that can be observed throughout the decade is the growth of regionalism. In spite of resistance among many local leaders and groups, it appeared to many that it was time "to bury the hatchet" between Pontiac and Oakland County. (County Manager Daniel Murphy, The Oakland Press, May 11, 1978.) The desire for autonomy remains strong, however, as noted in a recent vote by residents of Pontiac Township to become an independent city. There are several

important examples of the successful regional cooperation, such as the Superbowl. Both Detroit and Michigan worked with Pontiac to secure the event for the stadium, and in return, the Detroit Convention Bureau was put in charge of local arrangements. Some residents in Pontiac are afraid that the city will be lost in this arrangement, but most recognized Pontiac did not have sufficient resources to conduct the planning. Furthermore, the benefits of the event are largely regional. Another example of regional thinking was the city's reaction to GM's move to Lake Orion.

Another response to complexity has been a preoccupation with image in the community. An image is a superficial reflection of a situation: it flattens the reality and distorts complexity. Since we see only the reflection of circumstances in an image, viewing the shape or pattern of events, we are not required to investigate the contradictions, detail and confusions that inevitably are present.

Images oversimplify differences. For example, much of what is reported as "black and white differences" overlooks the variety of black and white responses to events. Black school board trustees, or city commissioners have diverse personalities and there continues to be considerable fragmentation among black leaders in Pontiac. Whites seldom appreciate this. On the other hand, many black leaders seem to think that all whites agree on issues, when this is also not true. The reality is that many people and groups are worlds apart in their views of local events, and the gross concepts employed in image-building mask these differences.

In contemporary society the media aggrevate the impact of images, and foster artificial views of events. Because Pontiac was presented as a violent and racially divided city during the busing controversy, many believe that the most serious problem of the community is to improve the image of Pontiac. Problems in all parts of the community are discussed in terms of the image of the city, and decisions are made on how these will influence the city's image.

The Schools - A Decade of Desegregation

> In sum, as we have had in the past a boom-and-bust economy in the United States, so we have had in effect boom-and-bust cycles of overgeneralization about social and educational developments in American society, passing in less than a decade from egregious optimism about national progress to scarcely less shallow assumptions of total national depravity and despair. Today, as we confront the human as well as the technological structures we have erected, those who struggle against ineptitude in education and shoddiness in society may despair, just as some political scientists and governmental reformers, struggling with entrenched civil service echelons, sometimes wish that the old spoils system and the old political machines could be restored. Critics of education may be unjustifiably nostalgic for the past, even as the critics of civil service forget the horrors of the spoils system, and they may have forgotten what might be thought of as the first law of reform: that every reform will breed unexpected deleterious consequences, leading to the need for new reforms. This law of the unanticipated consequences of purposive social action is one of the few established findings of social science, and it is one of the sources of the currect mood of despair and powerlessness which haunts so many Americans today. But neither nostalgia nor despair is justified.
>
> Gerald Grant. Implications in Competence Based Education in Higher Education.

In 1978, Superintendent Whitmer retired. He served as President of the National Association of School Administrators during his last year. The school board, composed of four black and three white members, selected Odell Nails to become the new superintendent. Nails, a black administrator, had been appointed assistant superintendent when the school district was required to appoint a black to this position by the school desegregation order. The local political issue centered upon Nails as an inside candidate, known to the community, versus an unknown "outside" candidate.

Throughout the decade federal education programs continued to grow in importance. By 1980, 20% of the school budget came from federal funding. A strong parent group with black leadership coalesced around Title I programs. In addition, other parent groups in the PTA and Hispanic community participated in school support activities.

Two issues dominated educational politics throughout the decade. Neither was nique to Pontiac, or directly a result of busing, but this was often forgotten in the debates and discussions locally. The first concerned the quality of education and the second, the financing of public education. They were joined together in nine consecutive millage elections between 1978 and 1981.

Pontiac students, like students in other urban school districts, score poorly on standardized achievement tests. Although educators city a number of reasons for the failure of urban schools, it appears that

school personnel have consistently worked more effectively with middle class students. In Pontiac, such students have declined in number throughout the decade. Moreover, achievement scores fell throughout the nation during the seventies. There has been a slight improvement in the eighties and Pontiac students follow this rising trend. However, in spite of gains, there is a widespread belief that public school educators have adopted lower standards than a decade ago. The reasons cited for the decline range from a belief that school discipline is inadequate, to poor teaching, deteriorating home life, television, and progressive ideas about learning. Educators challenge many of the assertions about the decline in quality, but their disclaimers have not prevented a loss of confidence in public education throughout the U.S. Pontiac is no exception.

When Odell Nails became superintendent, he promoted a program called POP, Pontiac Operation Propell, designed to motivate youngsters to do well in academic subjects by providing encouragement and public recognition. The program has been enthusiastically received. It is not clear whether these gains are the result of POP or other compensatory programs throughout the decade, such as ESEA; or result from a change in the focus of concern among professional educators to establish more structured learning situations. The graduates of public schools, however, increasingly do not appear to have the basic competencies required in contemporary society. For example, one report on the performance of 43 CETA employees from standardized achievement tests administered by a private training group, showed that 30 read below the

ninth grade level; 28 were below the eighth grade level in language skills; and 35 were below the seventh grade level in arithmetic. Most startling of all, the report concluded: "Whether a person had a high school diploma or not did not seem to alter grade level results." (City of Pontiac Inter-Department Memorandum, November 25, 1980).

Other evidence of dissatisfaction with educational quality among voters can be cited. In a study commissioned by General Motors, researchers concluded that voters "generally rate their public schools in a negative manner in most specific areas of performance" (Massogolia and Associates, March 29, 1981). Between 55% and 65% of those questioned gave the District negative ratings for "efficient administration, teaching the basic subjects, maintaining high educational standards, limiting incidents of violence and vandalism, and providing believable informtion about school matters" (Ibid, p. 18). In another study prepared for the State Department of Education by Hubbard Associates, it was discovered that parents with children in public schools rated the schools higher than parents with children in private schools and non-parents. However only 28% of all eligible voters fall into the first group (Voter Attitudes Toward the Pontiac Public Schools, July 1980).

The attitude surveys are documenting attitudes and demographics that extend far beyond Pontiac: similar finding would be reported in almost all urban school districts. However, it has become critical in Pontiac because the district has had to request additional funding through millage elections. Between 1978 and December 1981, eight consecutive

millage proposals were defeated. The District adopted a half-day schedule until the State Department of Education declared this illegal. Substantial numbers of teachers have been laid off, administrative and support personnel have been reduced, libraries and extra curricular activities disbanded, and a financial deficit created. In part, the defeat of school proposals reflect the worsening economic fortunes of Pontiac residents Some believe the millage defeats are still a reflection of anti-busing sentiment even though school officials have proposed a popular stabilization program that reduces the amount of busing throughout the district but still falls within desegregation guidelines. In addition, all surveys of parent attitudes indicate support for desegregation. Local politics also affect the millage votes. Some residents personalize the problem as dislike of the new superintendent. Until December, 1981, Nails noted in frustration that: "In the three years I've been superintendent, voters haven't given me a red dime" (Oakland Press, June 22, 1981). On the other hand, the Superintendent of Education continued to hold the confidence of most trustees on the Board. Accounts of questionable administrative practices have led to several investigations. The administrators and trustees were cleared of wrong doing, but the attacks further weakened the credibility of the central staff. In addition, school board members have received a good deal of media attention because of frequent quarrels. The conflict has been identified as black-white issues, and the board also has reduced public support. Some black leaders believe that the lack of financial support reflects continued racism: whites deny this.

However, there are other important components of the financial crisis. One is the role of state funding, and the other, the problems of inequity. Both of these affect Michigan school districts other than Pontiac and reflect the drastic reduction in K - 12 funding from 30% of the total state budget in 1970, to 15% at present. Furthermore, Michigan's complex funding formula works to the disadvantage of districts like Pontiac, who lose state dollars by collecting additional tax dollars if these are within the formula. State funding compounds the inequities between districts. For example, in wealthy Bloomfield Hills, the district spent $3,277.24 per student in 1980, compared to Pontiac's $1,803. Teacher and administrator salaries are higher compared to nationwide figures, in part because of strong unions.

Pontiac employees are not at the top of Oakland County salaries. (Due to lay-offs, many teachers and administrators are at the top of the pay scale because of seniority and advanced certification.) Although it is likely that the system of state financing will be questioned in legal cases in the near future, and employees will agree to no raises for a period of time, it is also clear that there must be a radical reassessment of expenses during the next few years if the district is to have a solid financial footing.

On December 9, 1981 a millage vote passed after an intense campaign to make voters realize that the schools would actually close in six weeks without additional funds. The Sate Superintendent of Public Instruction flatly announced that no school district would be given additional money in light of Michigan's recession. Teachers,

administrators, and parents walked door-to-door to solicit votes; student marched and paraded; both local newspapers supported the millage as did the Detroit newspapers; and the educational unions and associations helped to organize the efforts. A new community group called Citizens for Quality Education is credited with spearheading the successful millage drive locally. Interestingly, he head of this group is principal of a religious school, admitted that he became active becasue he could not visualize a community without public schools. This theme - what would happen if the schools closed - was repeated throughout the campaign. For example, what would the national media would say about Pontiac when the Superbowl came in January if the schools were closed! An unusual coalition emerged to get out the vote: black leaders recruited black voters who had been apathetic in the other campagins; whites in the northern part of the district were courted steadily; the county prosecutor who had served NAG, urged passing the millage. In a record voter turnout of 10,000, the millage passed by a 2:1 margin. The campaign was an all-out effort for survival, and was successful.

Although the recent vote prevented NAG's 1971 claim from coming true, "to bankrupt the school district," the District still has grave financial problems. The schools are in debt and many programs will not be restored. Moreover, there remains a high level of distrust towards the administration and school board. There is also danger that the millage defeats will be attributed only to economic conditions. For example, Superintendent Nails cites three factors for the voting

defeats: unemployment, inflation and retired people on fixed incomes (Oakland Press, May 7, 1981). We believe that the votes reflect more serious problems: a general loss of confidence in public education. Once again we can witness a national phenomena. There is deep frustration and anger with government in many areas of the nation. For example, several GM workers in Pontiac staged a tax revolt in Fall, 1978, and refused to pay state and national taxes. School millage votes provide an immediate way to express this anger. But a more critical issue is the decline in numbers of middle class students - both black and white - in the public schools. Middle class parents in Pontiac have been withdrawing their children from the public schools at the rate of 10% a year for the last three years. Several prominent local officials in educaton and government no longer have their children in the Pontiac schools. Unlike some cities in the U.S., there is not an extensive system of parochial schools to provide an alternative educational system. Those that exist in Pontiac are filled to capacity, and new religious schools have been growing in number. However, given the economic conditions, for many Pontiac residents, tuition is a luxury.

In 1971, school trustee Robert Irwin told U.S. Senators that desegregation would not last in Pontiac, saying "I don't think Pontiac is big enough to carry this because it is too easy to get out of Pontiac" (U.S. Senate Hearings, p. 9842). In the decade since the court order, residential desegregation will insure desegregation in the schools even if busing declines. But a new form of segregation is taking place between rich and poor. As middle class parents turn away

from public education, the new separation is not between black and white, but between privlidged young people and those without resources.

We report that the loss of confidence in public education is not confined to Pontiac, but because the people of Pontiac are faced with economic dislocation due to the emergence of the post-industrial era, the problem is more severe in this community. The challenge of advanced technology is an educational challenge far more threatening than Sputnik. Students must not only become competent at basic skills, but they must be ready to learn many new ideas, and know how to learn to survive in a learning society. Yet, as one critic concluded:

> There has been very little or no change in school structure or management to accomodate these massive technological, social and relationship changes and needs.
>
> James Comer, Implications of an Invervention Project, 1968.

The danger is that just as busing consumed enormous effort, time and energy and masked problems of learning in the sixties and early seventies, so financial problems in the early eighties will mask learning problems. Middle class parents can look elsewhere to provide for their children's future and will do so. Unless the schools can respond creatively, quickly and intelligently to the changes experienced throughout the community, they will be unable to prepare the children of Pontiac for the post-industrial world.

School-Community Relations - A Decade of Desegregation

> The question, "inwhat sense is the public school public? is simultaneously a question about the authority of the professional, the structure of the polity, and the role of the public. A satisfactory approach to the future of schoool-community relations must take account of all three elements.
>
> Thomas Green. Harvard Educational Review. 1969.

School-community relations refer to the interaction between schools and communities. Stated simply "Almost nothing happens in a school that is not or cannot become the community's business." (Saxe, 1975:9). However, professional educators have tended to view the community's interest in education narrowly, generally referring only to the parents of students. Furthermore, educators, like all organizational administrators, try to maintain their autonomy by keeping education apart from local political bodies and non-professionals. The experience of Pontiac throughout the decade is that such a view of "the public" is grossly inadequate to deal with the interrelatedness between schools and other communal organizations. Moreover, given a turbulent and changing environment, the social relationships between individuals and organizations within the community become more complex, compounding the interdependence between units.

When we began the network project we thought that we would be able to propose a model of school-community interrlationships based upon social networks that would lead to more cohesive and coorinated relationships between schools and communities. This is why we described in some detail several efforts at coordination in Pontiac during the age

of complexity. Examples are: building the Human Resource Center, coordinating efforts with the Pontiac Area Planing Council, and community responses to the possible danger to children in the first few days of busing. Except in severe crises, or when additional resources were available from outside the community, coordination efforts between the school district and the city have not been successful. Nor do we believe that such efforts will be successful in the future for several reasons.

There are few legal mechanisms to require such coordination, particularly since school districts are independent fiscally. Another possible impetus for coordination - shared professional responsibilities to deliver services to children - has not been recognized as important either in legislation or professional training. Child and Family Services Agencies, for example, operate on philosophic assumptions quite removed from educator-practitioner assumptions. In training teachers and social workers, we seldom link the two or stress the connection in human service delivery. The professional literature and dominant perspectives of each aspect of social service are presented as separate fields with little overlap. Moreover, the recent White House Conference on Families shows how divided we are nationally in our views about families in contemporary society. The professional socialization of teachers has generally been weak and it would be difficult to locate a consensus among educators concerning the responsibilities of schools in overall child development or related areas. Moreover, the structure of public education includes many groups and programs that would inhibit

cross-fertilization, such as: unions, the way the school calendar is maintained; and traditional modes of delivering services.

In some communities, informal networks among school personnel and others in the community by-pass formal organizational arrangements to create a sense of congruency between the two. But in Pontiac, as in other urban areas, the growing chasm between middle class professionals and poor residents discourage discourage such interaction. More than half of the educators in Pontiac, both black and white, live outside the district, this is likely to change in the near future. As a result, the most local of community institutions - the school - has become socially distant from the concerns of citizens in the community.

In our view, even if the economic, political and social obstacles that separate schools and communities could be reduced, there would still be serious cognitive problems. The assumptions of educators about the functions and responsibilities of education are diverse, but they seldom include a commitment to more interaction with the rest of the community. There has been considerable rhetoric about the importance of this, but few areas in which it has been implemented successfully. Many of the assumptions that develop from a rational view of administrative decision making, for example, cotradict commitment to interorganizational cooperation. In a rational decision making model administrative leaders assess goals and directions for the organization and then compete in the interorganizational arena for resources that will enhance the organization's autonomy and power. Internally, decisions are made by a central staff resting at the apex of an

organizational hierarchy. The basis of professional consensus about what is "good" and what "works" is professional expertise.

In a complex and turbulent environment, however, this bureaucratic model of decision making does not function effectively and the professional model protests insensitivity to client concerns. During the age of complexity, two community phenomena may be thought of as attempting to redirect school relationships to avoid these negative consequences. The first was the protest politics of blacks to gain a share in educational decision making and the second, was the organization of community groups to veto decisions.

The demand for "community control" in the sixties was, in fact, a demand by black residents to have more representation (and it was assumed, control), over educational policies and programs. The politics of race that we described during this period reflected the negotiations and controversies surrounding those demands. However, when protest politics became electoral politics during the seventies, the second development occurred. Demands for citizen participation in grant programs and the legitimization of pluralism in desegregation stimulated the development and maintenance of such groups. Some of these groups began as advocates of particular causes; others as monitors to watch over programs. Through time, they also became integral features of the operation of organizations. For example, in schools, many black citizen groups are now part of the support system and no longer play an adversary role, while anti-tax groups have adopted the adversary role. Several commercial organizations and agencies, both private and public,

have developed community relations units to deal "with" the community. When one attends a meeting on school affairs, participants are often identified as representatives of an organization, rather than as an individual resident participating in community dialogue. Often the organizational representative is not a voter in Pontiac, but has considerable influence on the basis of expertise and organizational connections. In other words, school "politics" has become "organizational" politics to a large degree. Although community organization began at the same time as black protest, and was used by black organizations also, the veto strategies of community organizations are not racial. In our view, they reflect the tension between professional decision makers and those outside the decision making process who can only express their influence by the use of a veto. Because of this, any one issue in community politics becomes associated with a host of other issues from other domains. The veto is a gross instrument and cannot register political opinions finely, but incorporate a host of other concerns as well. This further complicates school-community relations.

Given turbulence and complexity there is an urgent need for school and community personnel to recognize their interdependence. Without ties to community groups other than parents and a serious commitment to serve the community in non-traditional ways, schools will not have sufficient public support to generate community resources. At the same time, communities must find more effective ways to participate in school activities and influence some aspects of organizational decision making

other than through protests and veto policies. It is no longer sufficient to talk about community education: the time has come to implement the idea because it is no longer an option or a choice for public schools, but a necessity for survival. In our view, without major shifts in professional thinking among educators, such implementation is impossible.

It is asking a great deal from the educators and citizens of Pontiac to meet the extraordinary demands for educational change at a time when there are fewer economic resources available than before, and to make changes with little assistance from other sectors of society. Yet, it was just such as extraordinary challenge that Pontiac faced the demands to respond to court ordered desegregation through busing. There are still scars from that demand, but the community did rise to the challenge. We can only hope that the same kinds of courage, determination, and will are available to respond to the educational crisis of the post-industrial era facing Pontiac in the eighties.

NOTES

1. Pontiac was named All American City by the American Municipal League for making the most progress in improving itself. The Oakland Press, April 15, 1975. The reference to Middletown refers to the book by the same name by Helen and Robert Lynd (1929). That community was selected because it was representative of most American cities in terms of population mix, income, etc. Our choice of Pontiac is that it represents significant sociological features of urban society.

2. Sloan (1976) reports that the heaviest outside recruiting took place during World War II, 1953, 1956. The last major recruiting effort took place in 1966 when 400 workers, half black and half white, were recruited from Appalachia. He writes: "This was a very unrewarding company venture. In large measure because of the restricted housing market in Lakeland (Pontiac) which prevented many workers from living with their families and forced many to take rooms in hotels and boarding houses as far away as Detroit, few of the new employees became permanent employees. (p. 106)

3. The reference to sleeping giant is apt, since Hispanic Americans in Pontiac have been divided. As a result, politically they have not been as influential as their number suggest. Pontiac had the largest percentage of Latin American population of any city in the state in 1970: there were 4,920 persons of Spanish origin, 589 specifically Puerto Rican and almost all the rest had Mexican background. In 1979 19.3% of black families in Pontiac were below the poverty level and 6.3% of Spanish speaking residents were in that category. During the seventies Spanish speaking residents did form a variety of groups that affected both the city and schools, in such areas as bi-lingual education, housing and cultural affairs. Several Latino organizations are influential, eg. the G.I. Forum, The Mutualistas, The Puerto Rican Club and cultural groups. In 1980 City Manager Jose Santiago was a key leader and there were several other prominent Spanish leaders active in the city.

4. See: Jacqueline Scherer and Edward Slawski, Hard Walls-Soft Walls: An Ethnography of an Urban Desegregated School, N.I.E. Final Report, 1978. We concluded that efforts to 'wall off' the school by controling students behavior through scheduling and restrictions were not successful because there are so many ways that community life can enter into the everyday operations of a building. We also argued that desegregation was not an interesting question sociologically and that it obscured the realities of race relations in education and in contemporary society.

5. A story that has become part of Pontiac folk lore concerns Harold Fitzgerald, former editor of The Pontiac Press. and one of the most powerful persons in the city. In the early 1920's GM was unhappy

with their Oakland Motor Division and sent Al Glancy, an executive, to close the plant. Glancy had just closed a plant in Wisconsin one week before he arrived in Pontiac. Fitzgerald provided Glancy with such a warm reception, including golf outings and other festivities, that he changed his mind and suggested that GM revamp the plant and name the next car Pontiac. Fitzgerald boasted that he was "the top voice" in the community. The Oakland Press, March 18, 1977. "In his prime, Fitzgerald was to the city what the legandary William Randolf Hearst was to the rest of the world - a power broker newsman." Don Kubit, The Oakland Press, March 18, 1977

6. Both Sloan (1967) and D. Warren (1975) noted the effects of social compression on black community life. Warren points out that the local neighborhood can be "a mechanism for heightening the parochial tendencies of local structures" as well as a springboard for participation in the larger society." (146) Sloan notes that some ghetto residents were vulnerable in promoting desegregation because they were dependent on white society and could suffer from sanctions. As a result, they could not provide militant leadership. At the same time, he notes that "The boundaries of the ghetto serve to bring together in close geographical and social proximity groups and social categories which would be more separate were it not for those boundaries. The result is that the Negro community is considerably more heterogeneous than the sterotyped image of the Negro community suggests." (39)

7. Part of the southern quality is reflected in the number of fundamentalist churches throughout the community. In Smith's samples of residents (1967, 1968), he found 134 respondents born in Michigan, as compared to 62 in the Middle South and 66 in the deep South. By comparison only 1 was born in New England, 30 in other midwest states, and 6 in middle Atlantic states. Sloan found that Negro leaders were usually from border states or other northern states.

8. Mr. Hugh Jackson, President of the Pontiac Urban League, allowed us to review the local Urban League files. These included programs, annual reports, and after 1964, board meeting minutes.

9. In Henry vs. Godsell et al., (165F. Supp. 87 E.D. Mich, 1958) the plantiff, Sharon M. Henry (a minor) claimed that the district had violated her civil rights because she attended a segregated school. Her father, argued that because the new school was constructed in an all Negro district, her freedom was denied. The Court decided that although the site selection did result in an all Negro school, the board selected the site on the basis of density of population, distance of children from the school and other legitimate considerations. Thus, it was not discriminatory. Dr. Whitmer believed that this decision had a major impact on subsequent site decision, since the use of other factors in determining site

locations was declared acceptable. The Keith ruling in contrast, supported Henry's reasoning.

10. Peshkin talks about the fit between the school and the community as follows:

> A school's community maintenance function takes us beyond general principles of education, success and fiscal rationality. . . Those who enjoy the congeniality and comfort of an existing good fit between the school and community reject the outlook of others--who disrupt this fit in the name of what to them are extraneous principles, however well sanctioned by the Bill of Rights, scientific finds, or established behavior contentions. (1978, 205 -206)

He notes that congruence between schools and communities are more difficult to develop in urban districts.

11. The school district consists of the entire city of Pontiac, Sylvan Lake and portions of the following townships: Avon, Bloomfield, Orion, Pontiac-Waterford and West-Bloomfield. The city comprises approximately half of the land. The latest de-annexation suit took place in 1975 when Lake View subdivision in Waterford wished to withdraw from the District. In 1970, parents from Bloomfield Hills with children attending the Irvin School, also tried to withdraw from the district. In both cases the Pontiac School Board resisted changes on the grounds that it would change the racial mix of the students and reduce the District's tax base. (Pontiac Board Meeting, August 20, 1970; Minutes of the Public Hearing of the Board of Education of Oakland Schools, March 11, 1975.)

12. The local press, according to Janowitz (1952) is seen as the agent of community welfare and progress, but in both metropolitan and small city papers, they funciton to control the way conflict is reported. Although media are not "the dependent, self-styled social agents that either they or members of the public imagine them to be "(Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 217) they do play an important function in reflecting the concerns of the dominant power groupings. They argue that information is a resource in creating and maintaining social power through three mechanisms: access, distribution and reinforcement over knowledge (184).

13. Sloan uses a reputational technique and identifies 20 black leaders. He concludes black leaders operate from a weak base of power and are most effective outside institutional channels. He identified the following as the key black leaders:

Urban League Executive Director, Dentist, Real Estate Broker, Electrical Contractor, Physician, Minister, Lawyer, Electrical Contractor, District School Adminstrator, Public School Teacher, Lawyer, School Administrator, Minister, Labor Official, Labor Official, Minister, Physician, Bondslady, Drug Store Owner, Labor Official.

14. In the late sixties, several black leaders were interested in black nationalism and other militant movements. One group, POOBY (Pontiac Organization of Black Youth) employed militant rhetoric in newsletters, speeches and other community occassions. Interest in black nationalism was also strong among several influential leaders. Although there was a wide spectrum of political views among local blacks ranging from an interest in assimilation to pluralism to racial domination, the term "black power" was used to encompass the entire range of views in the movement.

15. In 1962, the ward electoral system was changed to a system whereby commissioners were nominated by a district but ran at-large, so that each voter had seven votes. Under the old system, the voters in a district had elected a militant black leader several times. The new system meant that any black commissioner elected would have to be acceptable to white voters, and would consequently, be more conservative. A referendum drive sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce and endorsed by The Pontiac Press secured 11,500 signatures. Although 19.9% of the voters were black, and blacks unanimously opposed the change, it was passed with a total of only 26.7% negative votes. Sloan concluded: "The evidence strongly suggests that the white citizens of Lakeland (Pontiac) moved to adopt the new electoral system in order to control the quality of Negro representation on the commission." (p. 148) The "black beater" as it was known, was one of many factors that shifted political power within the black community. Sloan thought that moderates had gained overwhelming influence on blacks polities by 1967.

16. One of the issues that was important to black leaders was the need for a better jail. In the midst of the busing controversy Charles Harrison, Oakland County Commissioner, was arrested as he tried to tape prisoners with a recorder in the parking lot shouting from the jail about conditions. His attorney, William Waterman, asked the County to investigate conditions in the jail and another prominent black leader, Marie Johnson, bailswomen, agreed. The County sheriff complained that the incident was a "set-up", but a new jail was completed by the following Spring. In 1981, there has been a new concern that the Courts might require some prisoners to be released from the jail because of severe overcrowding. The new jail is now being used beyond its capacity. Pontiac Press, October 29, 1971.

17. The Pontiac Press conducted a study of the police in November, 1971 and found the following:

Overall, would you consider the Pontiac Police force as :

Rating	Black	White
Excellent	6%	20%
Very good	11% = 17%	36% = 56%
Good	28%	29%
Fair	39%	9%
Poor	15%	6%

Blacks overwhelmingly believed there were not enough black officers (85%) as compared to whites (44%). In 1970, the major crime in Pontiac increased 22%, moving the city from third place among cities in America of its population to second place. The total number of offenses reported was 6,633 as compared to 5,418, or one chance in 13 that someone would experience a crime. (The national average was 1 out of 36) Pontiac Press, September 21, 1971. The first decline took place in 1975 with a 14% decrease, and there had been a slow decrease until 1981. However, fear of crime was still rated a serious problem in 1977 (City of Pontiac Survey, 1977). The problem is more acute in particular neighborhoods than in others. for example, one neighborhood study defined residential and commercial burglary, purse snatching, car theft and rape as critical issues (Resident Meeting, April 16, 1980, Pontiac Community Plan).

18. There is no question that the design of the building was an essential factor in publicity. The challenge to Lewis and other architects was to build a child city. Another feature of the design was flexibility, "multi-use schools have a greater need for multi-use space than specialized facilities " Community School: Sharing the Space and the Action, p. 63. The philosophic justification was that community schools "simply open their doors to the public after school hours. Community/schools do not differentiate between school hours and public hours because the entire building is operated for the benefit of people of all ages in the community and is paid for and operated by educational and other public service agencies (p.3)." The Whitmer Center was hailed by Educational Facilities Laboratories as building new alliances. Visitors from all over the world visited the center; the University of Michigan and Michigan Institute of Technology developed architectural classes based on the center, and as one principal noted, the farther away one went from Pontiac, the more famous the HRC grew. However, the facilities are not flexible enough to be used in a traditional mode of closed classes, standard offices, or in schools set apart from the community. Without the administrative, personnel, and philsohophic changes to accompany architectural innovation, educational change cannot take place.

The Pontiac Area Planning Council also began as an effort to coordinate city and school physical planning and was strongly endorsed by

both units as well as the Mott Foundation. However, in April, 1970 it became independent of the Board of Education and City commission and became the Pontiac Urban Coalition. It grew less involved with physical planning and more concerned with social issues. The original function was forgotten when the Pontiac Press blamed the four white members of the school board for the split, noting "The formation of the PAPC was deemed vital when the fires were still smoldering after the 1967 disturbances. The City Commission and School Board wanted it to have a wide ranging representation which could effectively determine what went wrong, how to deal with it, and how to prevent future occurrences. The problem that led to the formation of th PAPC are still with us" Pontiac Press, May 26, 1970. Without funding the group disbanded two years later.

19. Slawski notes that evaluations of desegregation actually ask two questions: what is good for students and what is good? The first leads to preoccupation with student achievement; the second to issues of distributive justice. My point is that the American Civil religion is another significant factor. Desegregation was a test of the community's moral fiber: the schools had been publicly indicated in a court of law; the trauma of busing was an important purification rite. The community has triumphed over adversity and are therefore better because of the trial. It is no wonder then, that many residents resent criticisms from those who have not suffered the ordeal and have not had to confront busing and school desegregation. J. Scherer and E. Slawski Urban Quarterly Winter, 1981.

20. Desegregation, both in popular thinking and in social science studies, includes many affiliated ideas. Some of these are citizen participation, community control, equality of opportunity, busing, and integration. Each of these has another set of assorted themes that cluster around the term. For example, citizen participation involves thoughts on democracy, the roles of the professional and citizen in decision making, the mechanics of structuring representation. Community control was a political slogan related to black power, and later in Pontiac, to "grass roots" participation in decision making, and as opposition to busing by whites. The point is that it is confusing to put these ideas together and to do so has clouded much of the discussion on desegregation. We will try to sort out some of the terms in Part IV.

21. There was plenty of evidence that the Ku Klux Klan was active in Pontiac. In 1968, The Pontiac Press ran a five part series on the group after a reporter infiltrated the group. They called themselves "Society of Christian America" The Pontiac Press, Sept. 10, 1971. In 1970, the Pontiac and Michigan KKK, as well as the chairman of the 18th and 19th Congressional District American Independent Party attended a school board meeting. Some of the outspoken comments at that meeting were made by members later identified as participanting in the bus bombings. They were convicted largely on the evidence of an undercover fireman who infilitrated their ranks, just as the reporter had done several years

before. It is evident that NAG was a popular movement that depended on local support from housewives, factory workers and policemen. It championed old fashioned values: patriotism, love of God, and the family. In the words of Mrs. McCabe "If I had a high office I wouldn't permit the federal or state government to provide funds for anything in the county or city. We could take care of our own poor and old people and our schools with the money we would save by not paying taxes to Washington or Lansing. That way we wuld control the way we wanted our money spend and a bunch of socialist-mined legislators who didn't know or care what our feelings are couldn't tell us what we had to do" (The Sunday News Magazine, October 10, 1971). In an interview in 1977, Mrs McCabe stated similar views in more moderate language, repeating that it was not desegregation that she opposed, but busing (Interview, April , 1977).

22. One of the biggest problems has been the antagonism between Detroit and Pontiac over the Silverdome. The Detroit media and politicians, as well as those in Pontiac who opposed the stadium, were able to fuel the controversy on state funding and even gain the support of the governor. In May, 1978, for example, Mayor Holland said that he would never advertise in a Detroit paper when union officials asked him to do so rather than using the Oakland Press during a prolonged and bitter strike. He said, "They consider Pontiac a crisis city. They only come out here when something bad happens." The Oakland Press. The Pontiac-Waterford Times, May 18, 1978. City Manager, Joe Niebling said publicly: "Maybe a lot of people don't realize the animosity that exists between Detroit and Pontiac. We want to build our image here in Pontiac. I guess that we all realize that people may go elsewhere to be entertained during Super Bowl week, but in the selling of the Super Bowl, it seems like Pontiac is bei forgotten. The Oakland Press, February 15, 1981.

Another factor in Pontiac's support for the Silverdome is racial. The vote to support the revenue bonds passed by a narrow majority and would not have been successful without the almost unanomous support of black voters.

23. The literature on corporate involvement in local communities suggests that corporations can influence communities by unilateral action, cooptation and intervention. (Seiler and Summers:1979). Intervention is the last method adopted because it exposes the corporation to local controversies. The sheer magnitude of GM's presence in Pontiac determines local community events though the corporation tries to stay out of local politics directly. By the same token, when GM does not express interest in community events, the absence of participation also influences outcomes. As Seiler and Summers showed, the reputation technique does not reveal the scope of a corporation's involvement. Friedland also has shown that the political power of business does not depend upon participation by corporate elites, but derives from control over the literal life of the city and its locational freedom. Friedland,

"The Local Economy of Political Power," April, 1981, Pacific Sociological Review.

24. The following chart shows the degree of change between 1970 and 1975. Given the decline in both automotive and construction jobs since 1975, it is likely that the official November, 1981 unemployment rate of 26.5 is a conservative figure. Pontiac is more dependent on the auto industry than any other city in Michigan with 50.8% of the city's tax coming from this. In contrast, only7.8% of Detroit's revenues come from automobiles. The closest cities to Pontiac are Dearborn (47.3%) and Flint (42.2%). These figures do not count auto suppliers.

PERSONS EMPLOYED IN CITY OF PONTIAC BY EMPLOYMENT GROUP

	1970	1975	%Change 1970-1975
Automotive Manufacturing	35,137*	25,461	-27.5
Other Manufacturing	1,675	1,749	+ 4.4
Transportation, Communications Utilities	1,316	1,616	+22.8
Wholesale Trade	825	1,172	+42.1
Retail Trade	5,718	7,100	+24.2
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,493	1,587	+ 6.3
Business Services	7,286	8,051	+10.5
Public Administration and Services	10,989	15,225	+38.5
Constructions	812	544	-33.0
Agriculture and Natural Resources	112	73	-34.8
TOTAL	65,363	62,624	

*Excludes 10 week GMC strike.

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) based on Michigan Employment Security Commission Data, 1977.

PART II

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NOTES

1. Pontiac was named All American City by the American Municipal League for making the most progress in improving itself. The Oakland Press, April 15, 1975. The reference to Middletown refers to the book by the same name by Helen and Robert Lynd (1929). That community was selected because it was representative of most American cities in terms of population mix, income, etc. Our choice of Pontiac is that it represents significant sociological features of urban society.

2. Sloan (1976) reports that the heaviest outside recruiting took place during World War II, 1953, 1956. The last major recruiting effort took place in 1966 when 400 workers, half black and half white, were recruited from Appalachia. He writes: "This was a very unrewarding company venture. In large measure because of the restricted housing market in Lakeland (Pontiac) which prevented many workers from living with their families and forced many to take rooms in hotels and boarding houses as far away as Detroit, few of the new employees became permanent employees. (p. 106)

3. The reference to sleeping giant is apt, since Hispanic Americans in Pontiac have been divided. As a result, politically they have not been as influential as their number suggest. Pontiac had the largest percentage of Latin American population of any city in the state in 1970: there were 4,920 persons of Spanish origin, 589 specifically Puerto Rican and almost all the rest had Mexican background. In 1979 19.3% of black families in Pontiac were below the poverty level and 6.3% of Spanish speaking residents were in that category. During the seventies Spanish speaking residents did form a variety of groups that affected both the city and schools, in such areas as bi-lingual education, housing and cultural affairs. Several Latino organizations are influential, eg. the G.I. Forum, The Mutualistas, The Puerto Rican Club and cultural groups. In 1980 City Manager Jose Santiago was a key leader and there were several other prominent Spanish leaders active in the city.

4. See: Jacqueline Scherer and Edward Slawski, Hard Walls-Soft Walls: An Ethnography of an Urban Desegregated School, N.I.E. Final Report, 1978. We concluded that efforts to 'wall off' the school by controling students behavior through scheduling and restrictions were not successful because there are so many ways that community life can enter into the everyday operations of a building. We also argued that desegregation was not an interesting question sociologically and that it obscured the realities of race relations in education and in contemporary society.

5. A story that has become part of Pontiac folk lore concerns Harold Fitzgerald, former editor of The Pontiac Press. and one of the most powerful persons in the city. In the early 1920's GM was unhappy

with their Oakland Motor Division and sent Al Glancy, an executive, to close the plant. Glancy had just closed a plant in Wisconsin one week before he arrived in Pontiac. Fitzgerald provided Glancy with such a warm reception, including golf outings and other festivities, that he changed his mind and suggested that GM revamp the plant and name the next car Pontiac. Fitzgerald boasted that he was "the top voice" in the community. The Oakland Press, March 18, 1977. "In his prime, Fitzgerald was to the city what the legandary William Randolf Hearst was to the rest of the world - a power broker newsman." Don Kubit, The Oakland Press, March 18, 1977

6. Both Sloan (1967) and D. Warren (1975) noted the effects of social compression on black community life. Warren points out that the local neighborhood can be "a mechanism for heightening the parochial tendencies of local structures" as well as a springboard for participation in the larger society." (146) Sloan notes that some ghetto residents were vulnerable in promoting desegregation because they were dependent on white society and could suffer from sanctions. As a result, they could not provide militant leadership. At the same time, he notes that "The boundaries of the ghetto serve to bring together in close geographical and social proximity groups and social categories which would be more separate were it not for those boundaries. The result is that the Negro community is considerably more heterogeneous than the sterotyped image of the Negro community suggests." (39)

7. Part of the southern quality is reflected in the number of fundamentalist churches throughout the community. In Smith's samples of residents (1967, 1968), he found 134 respondents born in Michigan, as compared to 62 in the Middle South and 66 in the deep South. By comparison only 1 was born in New England, 30 in other midwest states, and 6 in middle Atlantic states. Sloan found that Negro leaders were usually from border states or other northern states.

8. Mr. Hugh Jackson, President of the Pontiac Urban League, allowed us to review the local Urban League files. These included programs, annual reports, and after 1964, board meeting minutes.

9. In Henry vs. Godsell et al., (165F. Supp. 87 E.D. Mich, 1958) the plantiff, Sharon M. Henry (a minor) claimed that the district had violated her civil rights because she attended a segregated school. Her father, argued that because the new school was constructed in an all Negro district, her freedom was denied. The Court decided that although the site selection did result in an all Negro school, the board selected the site on the basis of density of population, distance of children from the school and other legitimate considerations. Thus, it was not discriminatory. Dr. Whitmer believed that this decision had a major impact on subsequent site decision, since the use of other factors in determining site

locations was declared acceptable. The Keith ruling in contrast, supported Henry's reasoning.

10. Peshkin talks about the fit between the school and the community as follows:

> A school's community maintenance function takes us beyond general principles of education, success and fiscal rationality. . . Those who enjoy the congeniality and comfort of an existing good fit between the school and community reject the outlook of others--who disrupt this fit in the name of what to them are extraneous principles, however well sanctioned by the Bill of Rights, scientific finds, or established behavior contentions. (1978, 205 -206)

He notes that congruence between schools and communities are more difficult to develop in urban districts.

11. The school district consists of the entire city of Pontiac, Sylvan Lake and portions of the following townships: Avon, Bloomfield, Orion, Pontiac-Waterford and West-Bloomfield. The city comprises approximately half of the land. The latest de-annexation suit took place in 1975 when Lake View subdivision in Waterford wished to withdraw from the District. In 1970, parents from Bloomfield Hills with children attending the Irvin School, also tried to withdraw from the district. In both cases the Pontiac School Board resisted changes on the grounds that it would change the racial mix of the students and reduce the District's tax base. (Pontiac Board Meeting, August 20, 1970; Minutes of the Public Hearing of the Board of Education of Oakland Schools, March 11, 1975.)

12. The local press, according to Janowitz (1952) is seen as the agent of community welfare and progress, but in both metropolitan and small city papers, they funciton to control the way conflict is reported. Although media are not "the dependent, self-styled social agents that either they or members of the public imagine them to be "(Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, 217) they do play an important function in reflecting the concerns of the dominant power groupings. They argue that information is a resource in creating and maintaining social power through three mechanisms: access, distribution and reinforcement over knowledge (184).

13. Sloan uses a reputational technique and identifies 20 black leaders. He concludes black leaders operate from a weak base of power and are most effective outside institutional channels. He identified the following as the key black leaders:

Urban League Executive Director, Dentist, Real Estate Broker, Electrical Contractor, Physician, Minister, Lawyer, Electrical Contractor, District School Adminstrator, Public School Teacher, Lawyer, School Administrator, Minister, Labor Official, Labor Official, Minister, Physician, Bondslady, Drug Store Owner, Labor Official.

14. In the late sixties, several black leaders were interested in black nationalism and other militant movements. One group, POOBY (Pontiac Organization of Black Youth) employed militant rhetoric in newsletters, speeches and other community occassions. Interest in black nationalism was also strong among several influential leaders. Although there was a wide spectrum of political views among local blacks ranging from an interest in assimilation to pluralism to racial domination, the term "black power" was used to encompass the entire range of views in the movement.

15. In 1962, the ward electoral system was changed to a system whereby commissioners were nominated by a district but ran at-large, so that each voter had seven votes. Under the old system, the voters in a district had elected a militant black leader several times. The new system meant that any black commissioner elected would have to be acceptable to white voters, and would consequently, be more conservative. A referendum drive sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce and endorsed by The Pontiac Press secured 11,500 signatures. Although 19.9% of the voters were black, and blacks unanimously opposed the change, it was passed with a total of only 26.7% negative votes. Sloan concluded: "The evidence strongly suggests that the white citizens of Lakeland (Pontiac) moved to adopt the new electoral system in order to control the quality of Negro representation on the commission." (p. 148) The "black beater" as it was known, was one of many factors that shifted political power within the black community. Sloan thought that moderates had gained overwhelming influence on blacks polities by 1967.

16. One of the issues that was important to black leaders was the need for a better jail. In the midst of the busing controversy Charles Harrison, Oakland County Commissioner, was arrested as he tried to tape prisoners with a recorder in the parking lot shouting from the jail about conditions. His attorney, William Waterman, asked the County to investigate conditions in the jail and another prominent black leader, Marie Johnson, bailswomen, agreed. The County sheriff complained that the incident was a "set-up", but a new jail was completed by the following Spring. In 1981, there has been a new concern that the Courts might require some prisoners to be released from the jail because of severe overcrowding. The new jail is now being used beyond its capacity. Pontiac Press, October 29, 1971.

17. The Pontiac Press conducted a study of the police in November, 1971 and found the following:

Overall, would you consider the Pontiac Police force as :

Rating	Black	White
Excellent	6%	20%
Very good	11% = 17%	36% = 56%
Good	28%	29%
Fair	39%	9%
Poor	15%	6%

Blacks overwhelmingly believed there were not enough black officers (85%) as compared to whites (44%). In 1970, the major crime in Pontiac increased 22%, moving the city from third place among cities in America of its population to second place. The total number of offenses reported was 6,633 as compared to 5,418, or one chance in 13 that someone would experience a crime. (The national average was 1 out of 36) Pontiac Press, September 21, 1971. The first decline took place in 1975 with a 14% decrease, and there had been a slow decrease until 1981. However, fear of crime was still rated a serious problem in 1977 (City of Pontiac Survey, 1977). The problem is more acute in particular neighborhoods than in others. for example, one neighborhood study defined residential and commercial burglary, purse snatching, car theft and rape as critical issues (Resident Meeting, April 16, 1980, Pontiac Community Plan).

18. There is no question that the design of the building was an essential factor in publicity. The challenge to Lewis and other architects was to build a child city. Another feature of the design was flexibility, "multi-use schools have a greater need for multi-use space than specialized facilities " Community School: Sharing the Space and the Action, p. 63. The philosophic justification was that community schools "simply open their doors to the public after school hours. Community/schools do not differentiate between school hours and public hours because the entire building is operated for the benefit of people of all ages in the community and is paid for and operated by educational and other public service agencies (p.3)." The Whitmer Center was hailed by Educational Facilities Laboratories as building new alliances. Visitors from all over the world visited the center; the University of Michigan and Michigan Institute of Technology developed architectural classes based on the center, and as one principal noted, the farther away one went from Pontiac, the more famous the HRC grew. However, the facilities are not flexible enough to be used in a traditional mode of closed classes, standard offices, or in schools set apart from the community. Without the administrative, personnel, and philsohophic changes to accompany architectural innovation, educational change cannot take place.

The Pontiac Area Planning Council also began as an effort to coordinate city and school physical planning and was strongly endorsed by

both units as well as the Mott Foundation. However, in April, 1970 it became independent of the Board of Education and City commission and became the Pontiac Urban Coalition. It grew less involved with physical planning and more concerned with social issues. The original function was forgotten when the Pontiac Press blamed the four white members of the school board for the split, noting "The formation of the PAPC was deemed vital when the fires were still smoldering after the 1967 disturbances. The City Commission and School Board wanted it to have a wide ranging representation which could effectively determine what went wrong, how to deal with it, and how to prevent future occurrences. The problem that led to the formation of th PAPC are still with us" Pontiac Press, May 26, 1970. Without funding the group disbanded two years later.

19. Slawski notes that evaluations of desegregation actually ask two questions: what is good for students and what is good? The first leads to preoccupation with student achievement; the second to issues of distributive justice. My point is that the American Civil religion is another significant factor. Desegregation was a test of the community's moral fiber: the schools had been publicly indicated in a court of law; the trauma of busing was an important purification rite. The community has triumphed over adversity and are therefore better because of the trial. It is no wonder then, that many residents resent criticisms from those who have not suffered the ordeal and have not had to confront busing and school desegregation. J. Scherer and E. Slawski Urban Quarterly Winter, 1981.

20. Desegregation, both in popular thinking and in social science studies, includes many affiliated ideas. Some of these are citizen participation, community control, equality of opportunity, busing, and integration. Each of these has another set of assorted themes that cluster around the term. For example, citizen participation involves thoughts on democracy, the roles of the professional and citizen in decision making, the mechanics of structuring representation. Community control was a political slogan related to black power, and later in Pontiac, to "grass roots" participation in decision making, and as opposition to busing by whites. The point is that it is confusing to put these ideas together and to do so has clouded much of the discussion on desegregation. We will try to sort out some of the terms in Part IV.

21. There was plenty of evidence that the Ku Klux Klan was active in Pontiac. In 1968, The Pontiac Press ran a five part series on the group after a reporter infiltrated the group. They called themselves "Society of Christian America" The Pontiac Press, Sept. 10, 1971. In 1970, the Pontiac and Michigan KKK, as well as the chairman of the 18th and 19th Congressional District American Independent Party attended a school board meeting. Some of the outspoken comments at that meeting were made by members later identified as participanting in the bus bombings. They were convicted largely on the evidence of an undercover fireman who infilitrated their ranks, just as the reporter had done several years

before. It is evident that NAG was a popular movement that depended on local support from housewives, factory workers and policemen. It championed old fashioned values: patriotism, love of God, and the family. In the words of Mrs. McCabe "If I had a high office I wouldn't permit the federal or state government to provide funds for anything in the county or city. We could take care of our own poor and old people and our schools with the money we would save by not paying taxes to Washington or Lansing. That way we wuld control the way we wanted our money spend and a bunch of socialist-mined legislators who didn't know or care what our feelings are couldn't tell us what we had to do" (The Sunday News Magazine, October 10, 1971). In an interview in 1977, Mrs McCabe stated similar views in more moderate language, repeating that it was not desegregation that she opposed, but busing (Interview, April , 1977).

22. One of the biggest problems has been the antagonism between Detroit and Pontiac over the Silverdome. The Detroit media and politicians, as well as those in Pontiac who opposed the stadium, were able to fuel the controversy on state funding and even gain the support of the governor. In May, 1978, for example, Mayor Holland said that he would never advertise in a Detroit paper when union officials asked him to do so rather than using the Oakland Press during a prolonged and bitter strike. He said, "They consider Pontiac a crisis city. They only come out here when something bad happens." The Oakland Press. The Pontiac-Waterford Times, May 18, 1978. City Manager, Joe Niebling said publicly: "Maybe a lot of people don't realize the animosity that exists between Detroit and Pontiac. We want to build our image here in Pontiac. I guess that we all realize that people may go elsewhere to be entertained during Super Bowl week, but in the selling of the Super Bowl, it seems like Pontiac is being forgotten. The Oakland Press, February 15, 1981.

Another factor in Pontiac's support for the Silverdome is racial. The vote to support the revenue bonds passed by a narrow majority and would not have been successful without the almost unanomous support of black voters.

23. The literature on corporate involvement in local communities suggests that corporations can influence communities by unilateral action, cooptation and intervention. (Seiler and Summers:1979). Intervention is the last method adopted because it exposes the corporation to local controversies. The sheer magnitude of GM's presence in Pontiac determines local community events though the corporation tries to stay out of local politics directly. By the same token, when GM does not express interest in community events, the absence of participation also influences outcomes. As Seiler and Summers showed, the reputation technique does not reveal the scope of a corporation's involvement. Friedland also has shown that the political power of business does not depend upon participation by corporate elites, but derives from control over the literal life of the city and its locational freedom. Friedland,

"The Local Economy of Political Power," April, 1981, Pacific Sociological Review.

24. The following chart shows the degree of change between 1970 and 1975. Given the decline in both automotive and construction jobs since 1975, it is likely that the official November, 1981 unemployment rate of 26.5 is a conservative figure. Pontiac is more dependent on the auto industry than any other city in Michigan with 50.8% of the city's tax coming from this. In contrast, only7.8% of Detroit's revenues come from automobiles. The closest cities to Pontiac are Dearborn (47.3%) and Flint (42.2%). These figures do not count auto suppliers.

PERSONS EMPLOYED IN CITY OF PONTIAC BY EMPLOYMENT GROUP

	1970	1975	%Change 1970-1975
Automotive Manufacturing	35,137*	25,461	-27.5
Other Manufacturing	1,675	1,749	+ 4.4
Transportation, Communications Utilities	1,316	1,616	+22.8
Wholesale Trade	825	1,172	+42.1
Retail Trade	5,718	7,100	+24.2
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,493	1,587	+ 6.3
Business Services	7,286	8,051	+10.5
Public Administration and Services	10,989	15,225	+38.5
Constructions	812	544	-33.0
Agriculture and Natural Resources	112	73	-34.8
TOTAL	65,363	62,624	

*Excludes 10 week GMC strike.

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